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A
CRITIQUE
ON THE
POETICAL ESSAYS
OF THE
REV. WILLIAM ATKINSON, M. A.
Fellow of Jesus College, Cambridge.

TALE TUUM CARMEN NOBIS, DIVINE POETA,
QUALE SOPOR FESSIS IN GRAMINE; QUALE PER ÆSTUM
DULCIS AQUÆ SALIENTE SITIM RESTINGUERE RIVO.
VIRG.

To which is added,
AN APPENDIX,
CONTAINING
TRIM'S LETTERS TO MR. ATKINSON,
Accompanied with a
NARRATIVE,
And illustrated with
Notes and Observations.

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1787.

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TO

THE REV. JOHN CROSSE,

VICAR OF BRADFORD.

SIR,

LOOKING round for a respectable character, and a judge of literary merit, to whom I might dedicate the following pages, I have fixed upon you; and, I flatter myself, the public will admit the propriety of the choice. You have, fir, in the short time you have resided

sided in this place, by an activity, that has no example, and by a display of ingenuity, which few possess, acquired a reputation that distinguishes you much from the peaceful virtue and undefining integrity of your amiable predecessor. Content with the applause of his own heart, the good opinion, and filial reverence of his parishioners, *he* formed no projects for extending his authority, or increasing his revenues. But you, sir, in the space of three, short years, have performed exploits sufficient to signalize a reign of fifty. You have embellished your church, improved your house; and, what is more extraordinary, by so doing, have acquired a considerable sum of money, in a manner that does equal credit both to your heart and understanding.

But, sir, whilst I celebrate the active policy of the *divine*, let me not forget the milder virtues of the *man*. The disinterestedness, the generosity, the consistency of your conduct, and
the

the sacred regard you ever pay both to your promises and declarations, on the most trifling, as well as the most important occasions, exhibit you to the world as a shining light in the midst of a dark and degenerate age.

But illustrious as this character is, I should not have made you the subject of the present address, if you had not been as much distinguished by your learning and love of literature, as by the other great and shining qualities I have recorded. Sent very early* to college,
and

* Nothing, perhaps, has been so injurious both to the honour and interests of the Church of England as a very different species of men, who, sometimes, get enrolled among her teachers and professors. These are persons, who were, originally, designed for trade, but being found too dissipated for the serious and important business of a shop, have been translated by their parents to a more sacred calling, from a conviction that they were fit for no other. These men, instead of carrying into the church the enlarged notions and liberal sentiments of gentlemen, soon discover a
fodid

and indulged with a long residence there, you had an opportunity, which few possess, of drinking deep of the cup of knowledge; and, though, you boast, with great humility, that, for many years, you have read but *one book*, I can affirm with truth, that the soil was, originally, so well cultivated and improved, that it has, hitherto, been enabled to produce successive crops both of wit and learning, without any sensible diminution either of its fertility, or its strength.

Mr. - Atkinson's publication, I make no doubt, has engaged your attention, both on account

fordid narrowness of mind, contracted in their former employment, and, frequently, accompanied with the low cunning and mean contrivances of sharpers. Yet such men as these expect to be treated as *sacred characters*, merely because they preach and pray, and are habited in black; but the moral poet tells us,

"Worth makes the man, and want of it the fellow:

"The rest is all but leather and prunello."

count of its intrinsic merit, as well as the popularity of the performance. You have said, (and you are always sincere in your declarations) that you look up, with veneration, to the superior knowledge, and superior piety of this young man. You will have the pleasure, in the following pages, of seeing both represented in their proper light; and, I make no doubt, will be struck with the good sense, the chastity of thought, and the religious turn of mind displayed in this inimitable composition. A conformity of sentiment, as well in secular as religious affairs, very naturally endears you to each other, and has been the means of forming a friendship, which is as likely to be as durable as it is honourable.

Long may you both continue to be the wonder of the county of York, and the peculiar ornaments of the West-Riding! And if, sir, at any time, you should, unfortunately, lose that insensibility, which you glory in as your happiest

happiest acquisition, and should feel either the reproaches, or insults of mankind, may your amiable friend, in that hour of distress, prove your comforter; and may that powerful eloquence, which enables him, at will, to raise storms and compose them in female bosoms, have the same happy effect upon yours, and smoothe the waves of that restless and tempestuous ocean!

Wishing you both the esteem and happiness you merit,

I remain,

Sir,

With due respect,

Your devoted humble servant,

TRIM.

BRADFORD,
SEPT. 25, 1787.

A

CRITIQUE

ON THE

POETICAL ESSAYS.

THE Author of the Poetical Essays having, with a just and becoming confidence in his abilities, predicted that this work will be read with avidity by posterity, I shall endeavour to shew (a matter which his well known modesty will not permit him to undertake) that such opinion is reason-

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able

able and well founded.* The prediction he has made, however it may be carped at by the hypercritics of the age, will not offend any man of learning or true taste, because he knows such has been the language of all great poets. Horace could not refrain from saying, *exegi monumentum*, nor Ovid from adding, *iamque opus exegi*. Virgil, it must be owned, with a maiden delicacy, drew back from the public eye, and acquired fame by not appearing solicitous to obtain it; but Virgil † is, in every thing,
an

* Trim has, besides, another motive for writing the Critique; which, though it may be thought to favour a little of vanity, he will honestly confess. He hopes that Mr. Atkinson's immortal work will be the means of preserving such a perishable commodity as *his* name, and therefore, in the language of poetry, humbly requests permission to accompany this gentleman in his progress to future generations,

“ Oh, while along the stream of time *thy* name
“ Expanded flies, and gathers all its fame;
“ Say, shall my little bark attendant fail,
“ Pursue the triumph, and partake the gale?

Pope.

† The dying request of this great poet, that the *Æneid* should be consigned to the flames, as unworthy of the public eye, not having received its last polish, will, whenever recollected, raise a sensation in the bosom of the man of learning, which cannot easily

an *unique*, whom it is much easier to admire than imitate. The writer of the critique does not mean to produce all the beauties displayed in this ingenious work, (for then he must transcribe every line of it) but only to select the most shining passages for the instruction and entertainment of the public. If he meets with a few small blemishes, a due regard to impartiality (one of the first duties of a critic) will oblige him to take notice of *them*; and, indeed, it is not the interest of the author they should be concealed, as they will serve as foils to shew to greater advantage the splendor and brilliancy of the former.

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COLIN

fly be described. Such an instance of modest merit, diffident genius; or, if you please, solicitude to acquire only a well-founded reputation, never was, and, probably, never will be paralleled in the annals of literature.

COLIN AND LUCY.

A PASTORAL.

EVENING FIRST.

THE business of this pastoral commences at the close of day, when the poet tells us, that, the hinds being jocund,

“ Each one his lassy took ; yet than the rest

“ Two graver seem’d, their love was not in jest.”

These lines contain many beauties which a common reader may not, perhaps, be aware of. It will, therefore, be proper to point them out, both in justice to the ingenious author, and to excite the emulation of minor poets.

“ Each one his lassy took——.”

How sweetly expressive of the free and uncere-
monious manner, in which the young swains select
the objects of their choice, and of the easy and un-
resisting willingness, with which these coylefs maidens
suffer themselves to be taken ! The word *lassy*, I
believe, is new, having escaped all our great pasto-
ral writers, Spenser, Pope, Philips, and Gay. I
looked into Tim Bobbin’s dialect, to see if it meant

a Lancashire witch, but, after a very diligent search, could find no lassie there. As the author wrote his pastorals at Cambridge, it is probable the scene lies in the neighbourhood of that place, and that the country girls, in that part, are so called. I enquired of a young Cantab, if it was so; but he says he never heard of a lassie at college: but being but an Undergraduate he may not have studied these matters so attentively as a Master of Arts. I believe, however, there is no authority for the word, in print; but, if not, we are obliged to the ingenious author for enriching our language with a word so expressive and mellifluous. It is used, no doubt, as a diminutive, and means *little lass*, and like Catullus's diminutives, denotes tenderness and affection.

The reader of taste will take notice of a peculiar beauty in the expression of *each one*. Had the poet said, *each* took a lassie, his meaning might, perhaps, have been discovered; but how much has he increased both the perspicuity of his language and the harmony of his numbers by adding, *one* to *each*! A common poet would have said, "Each *lad* his lassie took;" but the poet who wishes to distinguish himself from the herd of vulgar rhymers, must aim at novelty as well in language as in sentiment.

“Two graver seem’d——.”

A judicious hint that they were meditating upon *something*! When young folks are chearful and gay, it may justly be supposed that their hearts are at ease; but when once they begin to appear thoughtful, we may reasonably conclude that they are either wounded themselves, or lying in ambuscade to wound others. The poet adds,

“——Their love was not in jest.”*

It will appear from the *consequences* that their love was in earnest. Smile not, gentle reader, for the consequence was not, as thou, perhaps, supposest, a distended apron-string and a bonny bairn; no, worse, infinitely worse, as thou wilt, in due time, be informed.

The

* How easy, sonorous, and majestic is the cadence of this verse! Since the days of Pope, perhaps, no couplet has been produced, which, for curious and highly polished versification, can be compared to this,

“Each one his lassie took; yet than the rest

“Two graver seem’d; their love was not in jest:”

But every rhymers is *now* melodious, and, if he cannot treat his reader with good sense, and refined sentiment, takes care, at least, not to offend his ear with harsh numbers and ungrateful discord.

The poet proceeds,

“ He led her round behind a neighbouring tree.”

Here we are surpris'd with an agreeable novelty. A common poet would have placed this happy couple *under* a tree, *sub tegmine fagi*; but our author, with an ingenuity, that has no example, makes his swain lead the damsel first round the tree, and then behind it. That this was rather a *round-about* way of doing things, must be granted; but, had the poet made his swain act in the common manner, there would have been nothing in his conduct to excite admiration or surprise. To her swain's artless, but warm professions of love, the damsel answers with great prudence

“ You tell us roses on our cheeks do blow,

“ 'Tis flattery all——.”

The author of the Essay on Criticism blames the verse,

“ Where feeble expletives their aid *do* join,

“ And ten low words do creep in one dull line.”

I observe here, to the honour of our author, that in his there are only *nine*; but I hope he will dis-

charge the expletive *do*, and procure a substitute of greater strength and comeliness for the next review. *

The

* Trim means the next *edition*; which he hopes soon to have the pleasure of reviewing, as an humble member of the honourable *Corps des Critiques*.—*Apropos des Critiques*: many persons have wondered that no notice has been, hitherto, taken of the Poetical Essays in the Monthly Review, although, soon after its publication, it was announced in the catalogue which accompanies that work. Trim is happy in having it in his power to remove this wonder, and, at the same time, pay a compliment to the ingenuity and good policy of the author. This gentleman ordered a copy of the essays to be printed on royal paper and superbly decorated, for the purpose, as he gave out, of being presented to the authors of the Monthly Review. The book, it seems, was received; but, although a whole year has elapsed, no notice whatever has been taken of it. Wicked wits will, perhaps, say, that the reviewers, wishing to make a proper return to our author's handsome compliment, have kindly kept back the essays from the public eye; and that they could not have given a stronger proof of their partiality and regard for the writer: but Trim is of a very different opinion: he suspects that what Mr. Atkinson meant only as a respectful, propitiatory sacrifice, the delicacy of these gentlemen construed into a design to corrupt their integrity and influence their judgement by a *bribe*; a suspicion, which if they had known any thing either of the good sense of Mr. Atkinson, or the sanctity of his character, they never would have entertained. However Trim hopes this gentleman will not repine at the disappointment, and assures him, for his comfort, that he will do every thing (as a general officer once said)

The swain still continuing to plead the violence of his passion; that his views are honourable, and that it is his wish to make her, and her only, his wedded wife, the maiden replies with great propriety,

“I tell you swain I will no longer stay

“To hear the nonsense that you’ve got to say.”

How sweetly simple this language! How characteristic is the word nonsense (in its most honourable acceptation) of these rude, naked, and unembellished lays! I cannot recollect any passage in our poets, that in *naïveté*, and rustic simplicity, is equal to this. It may be compared, without presumption, to the celebrated couplet of Philips, which has, hitherto, been deemed inimitable, but must now yield to superior excellence.

“Ah

said) within the *scale* of his abilities to draw the attention of the public to an object so worthy of their notice and admiration. He may be inferior in critical knowledge to those great dispensers of fame and immortality, but will venture to assert, that in industry and close attachment to his author, no man exceeds him; and, he flatters himself Mr. Atkinson will be satisfied with his diligence, when he is informed, that he has already liberally expended *six days* in reviewing the essays; whereas those gentlemen, it is probable, would not have had the generosity to bestow the scanty pittance of as many minutes, on that interesting and important work.

" Ah filly I, more filly than my sheep,
" Which on these flowery banks I once did keep."

The damsel, finding that nothing was to be had but nonsense, very wisely departs; and thus ends the first evening: and, indeed, *sat prata biberunt!* The reader must be nearly surfeited with dainties, and will naturally wish, for a short time, at least, to return to plainer, but less dangerous food.



EVENING

EVENING SECOND.

COLIN ALONE.

NOTWITHSTANDING the abrupt departure of the damsel, the preceding evening, the shepherd very naturally expects that he shall find her, at this time, less cruel; and, he gives, it must be owned, a good reason for thinking so.

“ She cruel thinks I never can be true;
 “ And yet so sweetly did she bid adieu,
 “ That still I hope her soften’d heart to find
 “ Obdurate less, and more to love inclin’d.”

We have a similar passage in Shenstone, but far inferior to this in melody and softness;

“ She gaz’d, as I slowly withdrew;
 “ My path I could hardly discern;
 “ So sweetly she bade me adieu,
 “ I thought that she bade me return.”

The damsel now appears; and, after hearing the same stale protestations, on the same stale subject, she coldly replies,

“—Think not Colin that your vows I’ll hear,
 “ Till you have *prov’d* you are indeed sincere.”

What

What proof of the shepherd's sincerity this ingenious damsel expected, we shall discover in a short time. The shepherd, not suspecting the damsel's meaning, answers, with great simplicity,

" I never wish'd to make but you my bride ;

" * Condemn not then at least, before I'm *tried*."

The damsel, judging from these words, that her swain had discovered her meaning, and was about to give her a *proof* of his sincerity, to encourage him to proceed, exclaims with great tenderness,

" Colin, you have my heart, I would say more ;

" But yonder see my mother's at the door.

" To-

* It is remarkable, that, though our author is extremely fond of adorning his verse with *monosyllables*, he generally omits them when necessary to complete the sentence and make it grammatical. Thus, in the line referred to, the pronoun *me* is wanting, as in the first quotation, this evening, the other pronoun *thee* : yet how easy would it be to a person, who has the slightest knowledge of the English language, to remove from the line before us the useless and unmeaning expletive *then*, and supply its place with the necessary auxiliary *me* ? e. g.

" Condemn me not, at least, before I'm tried."

Thus the line is not only made English, but acquires *some* degree of smoothness.

" To-morrow eve down in the wood I'll walk,
 " * Yet here I dare no longer stay to talk :
 " Be still as now, and you will surely find
 " Your Lucy ne'er was form'd to change her
 " mind."

The reader will observe, that the *rendezvous* comes very naturally from the damsel: for her swain not having either the wit or courage to propose one himself,

* To make the passage sense the word *yet* should be *for*. Our author seems to resemble some generals, who, provided they have their complement of men, care not whether they are fit for service or not. But this one defect is amply compensated for by the numerous beauties which appear in these lines. How agreeably must the reader be surpris'd at finding here the same rude sentiments and the same artless and unpolished language which distinguished our forefathers in the more happy times of rusticity and ignorance. A critic has said,

Scribendi recte sapere est et principium et fons ;

i. e. That before a man begins to write he should be possessed of a certain fund of *good sense* ; but the reader will observe, with pleasure, that there is no occasion for the smallest particle of it, and that to put together a certain number of syllables, and tag to the ends of them a certain number of rhymes, like sheep-bells, without harmony, but not without sound, will equally answer the purpose. It is with equal satisfaction Trim observes, that a man may shine as a poet, or a parson, without the smallest spark or glimmering of *learning*, which Pomfret emphatically styles

" The

himself, she was under the necessity of doing it, or being without. The words, *be still as now*, contain an intimation, which, perhaps, the reader is not aware of. Our poet, on all occasions, discovers great knowledge of the female heart; but, in the present instance, displays a sagacity that, perhaps, was never equalled. The damsel, it appears, left her swain, the preceding evening, because he treated her with nothing but what she deemed *nonsense*, viz. empty vows and uninteresting protestations. At the present interview, his behaviour was much the same, and the damsel affects to be much pleased with it; but, on parting, she archly recommends to him, to continue to be as *still* as ever. Was it because she was appre-

“The dear-bought purchase of the trading mind.”

It is, indeed, certain that learning cultivates and improves the mind; and as another poet says,

“—Makes the seeds of genius quicker grow:”

West.

But the reader will observe that where *no* seeds are, neither the art or industry of the cultivator (any more than the dew, or sunshine of heaven) can produce any fruits. Perhaps the less learning pastoral writers have, the better, as they are likely, on that account, to feel the passion of love more deeply and represent it more naturally; for, as a great poet observes,

“Love seldom haunts the breast where learning lies.”

Pope.

apprehensive he would not? no, it was, because she was afraid he would. Mr. Atkinson, who has studied the fair sex with as much attention, and, perhaps, more success than the *trinity*, well knows, that when a bashful maiden repeatedly exclaims, *don't be rude now, pray don't be rude*, to her lover who observes an obsequious distance, it is a repeated invitation to advance nearer, and take liberties, which her more bashful humble servant, perhaps, never thought of. That such was the damsel's meaning, in her present unnecessary caution, is evident; for, finding, at their next meeting, that her artful intimation was not effectual, but that her swain continued to be as *still*, as insipid, and as inanimate as ever, she prudently changes her measures, and attempts, by a different method, to put an end to his *stillness*; which the reader will soon have the pleasure to see attended with the success it merited. In the mean time, he will naturally admire the ingenuity* of the girl; but I beg leave to put him in mind, that the poet, who is the fountain, from which such ingenuity flows, is much better intitled to his wonder and admiration.

EVENING

* It has been observed, that a girl of sixteen has more ingenuity and is wiser in her generation, than a young man of six and twenty; which we shall see verified in the conduct of this arch and seducing damsel.

EVENING THIRD.

THE poet has very carefully, and, with great judgment, marked the precise time of the next interview, in the following lines,

“ ’Twas well to night the sun gone down the skies,
“ The moon just up, or just about to rise.”

Pastoral poets, in general, have been eager to adorn their verse with the beautiful and different appearances of these glorious objects: but perhaps, no two lines can be produced, either from ancient or modern authors, so embellished with the peculiar splendor of these shining orbs; the one emblazoned with the flaming glory of the descending sun, the other adorned with the milder lustre of the rising moon.

“ The moon just up, or just about to rise.”

The activity and easy dignity, with which the moon rises, is admirably expressed in this line. Perhaps, the only way to make the reader sensible of its various beauties is to parody it, and suppose the poet was speaking of himself,

“ WILL was just up, or just about to rise.”

How

How ingeniously constructed is a verse, when it will do as well to represent the rising of a poet or a parson, as that of the moon !

“ ’Twas well to night the sun gone down the skies.”

The meaning of the word *well* I am not aware of; neither can I discover what *part of speech the word *gone* is; but this I can assert with confidence, that if the line is not English (as a certain poet said of his own pastorals) it is something better. However, if the poet, in the next edition, should be disposed to make it English, it may easily be done, and, what no doubt will surprise the reader, without the alteration of a single word :

The sun to-night was well gone down the skies.

But this is submitted, with deference, to the superior judgment of the author.

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* Our author, both in the purity of his language and the harmony of his numbers, seems much to resemble Taylor, the celebrated water-poet, who flourished in the reign of James I. and who honestly confesses what some modern poets would fain conceal, but cannot,

“ I must confess I do want eloquence,

“ And never yet did learn my *Accidence* ;

“ For having got from *possum* to *posset*,

“ I there was gravell’d, could no further get.”

The damsel begins,

* "With art I've escap'd my mother's watchful
 "eye,
 "And to thy arms my Colin now I fly;
 "Yet e'er I trust thee, faithful shepherd swear
 "Thou ne'er wilt cause these eyes to shed a tear;
 "Thou ne'er wilt lead my untaught youth astray;
 "Nor make me to repent my love this day."

The maiden, it seems, is yet apprehensive that her swain will be as *still* as ever, notwithstanding she has told him, for his encouragement, that she now comes flying to his arms. The damsel, the reader will observe, talks of her *untaught youth*; but we shall soon see her commence teacher, and give her swain a § lesson upon a very agreeable and interesting

* This line has more than its just complement of syllables: Trim, therefore, hopes the ingenious author will discharge *one*, before the next edition.

§ Query if this damsel had not herself received a lesson from a young divine, who, like Abelard, possesses a tender heart, and like him, takes a pleasure in instructing a young damsel in her duty, and shewing her the way to happiness and heaven?—Not long ago he was very fond of a *Rosabud* in the country; and, one day, his mamma, coming unexpectedly into the pantry, caught this pious young man with the ruddy damsel on his knee. On the

ing subject. The shepherd replies to the preceding lines,

"I swear by Cynthia yonder rob'd in white,
"To thee I will for ever constant prove."

Juliet would have said,

“ O, fwear not by the moon, th’ inconstant moon,
“ That monthly changes in her circled orb,
“ Left that thy love prove likewise variable ;”

but the country damsel, it is probable, did not know who Cynthia was, and, therefore, made no objection to his oath: however, it seems, she knew he had sworn by something, (though she could not tell what) and replies,

* "Then to thy oath, since love is all I feel,
"My lips the wax may be, and thine the seal;"

the old lady asking him what he was doing there, he replied, that he had been catechising the young woman; and, as she repeated her lesson well, he had made her a present of a cheesecake.—The catechism made use of, on this occasion, was, probably, the same which Archer endeavoured to teach Boniface's rosy daughter, Cherry, viz. Where does love enter? where go out? &c.

* Mr. Atkinson tells us, in his preface, that he felt *amazing*
pleasure

and for fear that even this invitation should not be sufficient, (as the poet tells us) she throws herself into his arms! The garrison having thus surrendered at discretion, without even waiting for a summons, the conqueror was under the necessity of taking possession, and could not refrain from exercising some of the rights incident to victory; which, it seems, this considerate damsel had foreseen, and was prepared to submit to without murmuring. The swain, therefore, clasping her to his bosom, because (as the poet tells us) he found her already in his arms, very naturally exclaims,

“ The seal to all my vows I look on this,
 “ Thy cherry lips imprinted with a kiss,
 “ Ten thousand more I’ll give to love and you,
 “ Ten thousand more to witness I am true.”

It

pleasure in composing these essays, and that they “ cheered him in the lonely hour with pleasures not to be met with in more frequented companies.”—No doubt, to paint to the life, as he has done, such delicious scenes as these, and the still more delicious ones that follow, must have excited very agreeable sensations in a bosom so tender and so capable of feeling as his. What are the dull amusements of the *card table* to such raptures, such embraces as these!—Trim finds no fault with Mr. Atkinson’s *taste*, but only remarks,

Trahit sua quemque voluptas.

It has been observed by persons, perhaps, of more delicacy than critical knowledge, that the damsel was to blame for offering her lips unsolicited; but I beg leave to say a few words both in defence of the maiden and the poet, because if the former has, in any degree, misbehaved, or made a *faux pas*, some share of the disgrace will naturally fall on her creator and instructor. It should be considered that this was the *third* interview between these lovers, and that her swain had never yet had the courage or the civility to salute her. It was natural, and, perhaps, prudent, in this case, to encourage the bashful lad; and, as *all she felt was love*, that is, love in the highest degree, neither controuled by discretion, or restrained by modesty, it is not to be wondered at that she was either bold, or bountiful, on this occasion: and her generosity, it seems, did not pass unrewarded; for the poet tells us, that she received, in turn, twice ten thousand kisses, a number, which, I believe, no one before, except Anacreon, (who sometimes boasts of his exploits of this kind) ever bestowed on his mistress at one time. The young woman, as soon as she finds her lips at liberty, and had recovered her breath, exclaims,

" When at the altar we our vows shall plight,
 " Then may we live unblam'd in soft delight ;
 " And should it please the power supreme above,
 " To grant an offspring fair to crown our love ;
 " Surely each year we'll bleſs the happy day,
 " When we to Hymen's temple took our way."

This is perfectly in character ; for, as the young woman, through the whole courtſhip, felt much more of the tender paſſion than her ſwain, it was natural to make *her* expatiate on the *ſoft delights* of matrimony, and the probable happy conſequences. Other poets, it muſt be owned, have always confined theſe ſubjects to the other ſex, and left *them* to entertain their miſtreſſes with the fair proſpect of approaching pleaſure ; but our poet, with a boldneſs peculiar to himſelf, frequently overſteps the modeſty of nature, and, with an ingenuity never diſplayed before,

" Makes his men women, and his women men."

To the damſel's very natural obſervations on the ſweet proſpect of *ſoft delights*, the ſwain, with great ſimplicity, replies with ſome remarks on the pleaſures of *age* ; and, as ſportſmen talk of renewing the chace over the bowl, the ſwain tells her that *they* ſhall

shall have the satisfaction of repeating *their* pleasures over the fire; and concludes with saying,

“ O’er some we’ll *chuckle with our wonted blifs,
“ And end our stories with a mutual kifs.”

What the shepherd means by *wonted* blifs (as the time of enjoyment was not yet arrived) Trim knows not. Bentley would have said that it was a mistake of the printer, and that the author wrote *wanted* blifs; and that wanted blifs, as the couple were about to enter into the happy state of matrimony, had a peculiar propriety, and conveyed to the reader a very agreeable intimation. It will naturally be supposed, as the interview ends with the words *mutual kifs*, that the shepherd was not wanting in civility and duty to his intended bride; but Mr. Atkinson, who is, generally, very ingenious in his omissions, here displays equal ingenuity in telling us, in plain terms,

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§ “ *They*

* The critical reader will admire our author’s happy introduction of the word *chuckle*, which is peculiar to the inhabitants of the country, and is as natural to *them* as cackling to geese, or crowing to a cock.

§ “*They kifs and bid good night:*”

for fear, no doubt, that we should suspect that he had not attended to these necessary and important matters. But though our poet has conducted matters with great propriety and address, on this *particular occasion*, I hope, in future, he will make his females behave with a little more decency, not only because such conduct is more natural, but more amiable and worthy of imitation. That he may not be at a loss how to represent them in the most critical and interesting situations, I will take the liberty of pointing out to him what has been the conduct of other great poets, on similar occasions. Virgil (than whom no one was better acquainted with the female heart) says of a country girl, who wanted a *kiss*, but did not know how to ask for one,

*Malo me Galatæa petit, lasciva puella;
Et fugit ad salices, et se cupit ante videri.*

Horace (who was no less acquainted with the sex) describ-

§ The reader will observe, with pleasure, that the kiss was *mutual*, and that Mr. Atkinson, on all occasions, observes the strictest impartiality between the sexes, thinking it, no doubt, reasonable, that, as the ladies partake of the pleasure, they should also share the trouble and business of caressing.

describing a game at blind-man's-buff, represents a young woman well concealed from her amorous pursuer, but laughing aloud that she may be found and—*kissed*. In another place speaking of a young girl, he says (what is admirably characteristic of the whole sex)

———*facili sævitia negat*
Quæ poscente magis gaudeat eripi;

Or, as it is no less happily expressed by the French poet,

Qui mollement résiste, et par un doux caprice
Quelquefois le refuse, à fin qu'on le ravisse.

But, as these are authors, with whom, it is probable our poet has little acquaintance and whose language he has a very imperfect knowledge of, I shall give him an instance or two, from one of our own poets, whose design, like his own, was to exhibit the inhabitants of the country, in their homeliest dress, and give them ideas and sentiments suitable to their characters and situation. He introduces two young swains boasting of their happiness and the favours they had received from their mistresses.

“ LOBBIN.

" LOBBIN CLOUT.

" As Blouzelinda, in a gamesome mood,
 " Behind a haycock loudly laughing stood,
 " I flily ran and snatch'd a hasty *kiss*,
 " She wip'd her lips, nor took it much amiss.

" CUDDY.

" As my Buxoma, in a morning fair,
 " With gentle finger strok'd her milky care,
 " I quaintly stole a *kiss*; at first, 'tis true,
 " She frown'd, yet, after, granted one or two."

Besides Gay's design in *his* pastorals was to ridicule preceding poets, by parodying the most striking passages in their works, and to bring this species of composition into contempt, by adopting the most vulgar images and presenting them in the most vulgar language; but whether his wicked ingenuity, or our poet's grave and well-meant endeavours have been most successful in attaining this important end, the judicious reader will be at no loss to determine.

—But to return to our lovers: after the charming and delicious scenes presented to the reader, Trim is sorry to offer him one of a very different nature, and inform him that, though the swain was willing, and the damsel, (as he has seen) impatient for matrimony,

trimony, the parents of the latter not approving of the match, for prudential reasons, the young man, the day after the last interview, died with grief; and the young woman became distracted, and expired the day following.* I cannot, on this melancholy occasion, forbear exclaiming,

—*Quid*

* I have made no extracts from these scenes, because the author, contrary to custom, confining himself to the beaten track, and making no bold deviations, as usual, I have found nothing in them either to blame or to commend; the two following passages excepted. P. 20 we have this line,

“ Lucy was *set*, upon her arm reclin’d,”

It is my duty, as commentator, to observe that the participle, as well as the preterperfect of the verb *sit*, is *set*: but Mr. Atkinson makes us ample amends for this trifling fault by the following beautiful line,

“ The sparrows courted on the flates above.”

The poet here presents us with an image perfectly new and admirably emblematical of the happy state into which the two lovers were about to enter. I recollect but one passage in our poets (and that I think is Pope’s) where this active, little animal, whose manner of courting Mr. Atkinson seems to admire, is introduced,

“ Still to his girl he creeps on trembling knees,
“ And envies every sparrow that he sees.”

— *Quid non mortalia pectora cogis,
Auri sacra fames?*

and I beg leave to add that

“ ’Twas hard so true a damsel died a maid !”
Gay’s Dumps.

The *dramatis personæ* being dead, our author very naturally thinks of burying them; but confines his attention to the young woman, no doubt, out of compliment to her sex, and as the object most likely to heighten the distress of this very deep and affecting tragedy. The next scene, therefore, presents us with the burial of Lucy, to which Trim invites the reader, requesting him previously to arm himself with all the fortitude and resolution he possesses, as he will meet with an object there, which it will be difficult to behold without agitation and horror.

THE

THE
BURIAL OF LUCY.

TWELVE YOUNG MAIDS IN WHITE, SIX ON EACH SIDE
THE GRAVE.

THE reader will observe, that our poet here has artfully stepped aside into *dramatic* pastoral, and that nothing but actors are wanting to give life and reality to the representation. The funeral of Juliet, it must be owned, has an advantage in this respect over Lucy's;* the tolling of the bell, the wax tapers, and the fable pall, with its mournful attendants, giving an awe and solemnity to the scene. If the reader's imagination will supply these necessary decorations, (and if it will not it is not fit to accompany our poet's) the funeral of Lucy will be no way inferior to Juliet's in external pomp; and the dirge, which the poet himself has composed for the occasion, and which breaths the most celestial thoughts
in

* So, in the Fair Penitent, the death's head, the dead body, and the stage hung with mourning are very moving; but is not this a mechanical method of raising distress unworthy of a great poet? The reader will recollect that the funeral of Juliet, with its powerful apparatus, was not Shakspeare's, but the invention of modern times.

in the most sadly-pleasing strains, gives it a superiority which every mind warm with piety and attuned to harmony will deeply feel. The maidens chaunt in solemn notes,

" We leave thee in thy native soil,
 " We shed the friendly tear;
 " We wish thee rest from every toil,
 " And freed from every fear.

The reader will observe in the words *native soil* a striking allusion to the solemn denunciation, " Dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return," and how frequently our author's piety appears to adorn and moralize his song.

" We wish thee rest from every toil,"

a common poet would, doubtless, have said,

Now thou *hast* rest from every toil;

but our poet, with an anxiety that does honour to his feelings, follows the unhappy damsel *beyond* the grave, and is apprehensive that the passion, which so much agitated her tender bosom when on earth, may ruffle and discompose it *there*.* Perhaps no author
 ever

* Our author seems to have taken his system of divinity from
 the

ever discovered such parental concern for the *future state* of the unhappy offspring of his brain as this affectionate and tender-hearted man.

The maidens conclude with saying, that

“——— a sweeter flower

“Death never withering in his bosom wore.”

The reader will be struck with this ingenious thought, this *purpureus pannus*, whose gaudy colours on this russet and rustic garment glare with uncommon brightness. It seems to be of Italian manufacture, and, it must be owned, is worthy of the loom of *Tasso* or *Guarini*. If it is, *really*, the product of a colder country, the reader will wonder why he has not had more of these charming *conceitti*, which resemble more the thin Persian or glittering lutestring

the latin poet, whose creed is, that whatever our inclinations are here, either good or bad, the same, undiminished in warmth, and unabated in violence, we carry with us to the other world :

——— *vivis quæ cura.*

——— *eadem sequitur tellure repostos :*

Virg.

But Trim hopes this gentleman's imagination will stoop to be cooled and purified by the living water of christianity, which teaches better things, and inculcates very different notions.

lutefting than the plain but more fubftantial peices of British manufacture.

“ ——a fweeter flower

“ Death never withering in his bofom wore.”

What an image, calculated equally to excite terror and pity is here prefented to our eyes! We fee Death, as he is generally represented, a huge fkeleton, a head without eyes, a body without flefh, having this drooping lily ftuck between two fpare ribs, grinning horribly a ghafly fmile, proud of his nosegay (the firft perhaps he ever wore) and carrying it off in triumph. Neither Milton in his Hell nor Dante in his Inferno exhibit any figure fo horrid, any devil fo frightful as this hideous and gigantic fpectre. The reader may, perhaps think that in a work defigned to be uniformly plain and fimple, an image fo fingular, and, at the fame time, fo highly poetical, is misplaced. That it comes not with propriety from the mouth of a village maiden is certain; but then coming upon us, as Bays fays in the Rehearfal, unexpected and unthought of, it was the more likely to elevate and furprife us.

By

By way of Farce to this gloomy Tragedy (which is now ended) and to give the reader time to recover his wonted compofure, before he leads him again into the thorny path of criticifm, Trim will tell him a *diverting ftory*, not his own, (for he fhould not then prefume to think fo well of it) but one which he received from the ingenious author of the effays; and which will convince him, that this gentleman's converfation is as facetious and inftructive as his writings. The only time Trim ever was in this gentleman's company, being left alone with him for a few minutes, he faid he would tell him

A DIVERTING STORY.

"That being one day, at a country fair, with an acquaintance, whom he knew to be of a very amorous disposition, he looked out for a girl for him; and soon found out one which, he thought, would answer the purpose; that his friend, on examining the girl, discovered that she had but one leg, and was sadly mortified at meeting with such an impediment."—Trim laughed heartily at this ingenious trick put upon his amorous friend; though, not being an adept in these matters, he could not well comprehend how the want of a leg could be an impediment: indeed that it is not, the following

d singular

singular case will demonstrate; which Trim mentions *solely* for the information of Mr. Atkinson, who, though he appears to have bestowed much attention on subjects of this kind, seems to be in an error, in this instance; which, if not removed, might be attended with very bad consequences. Trim has an acquaintance in the south, a very amiable woman, who had the misfortune, when very young, to lose a leg, but is, notwithstanding, the mother of seven fine children; and, what makes her case singularly piteous, is that her husband, who is an officer in the navy, about a year after he was married, had the misfortune, likewise, to lose a leg, at the siege of the Havannah in 1762; so that this unfortunate, but not unhappy couple, could not, on any occasion, muster up more than two legs between them. Mr. Atkinson will learn, from this instance, that it is not perfectly safe to recommend even *one leg* to his amorous acquaintance.

The following anecdote relative to Mr. Atkinson's amiable friend, the present Vicar of Bradford, forms such an agreeable contrast to the preceding story, and, at the same time, does so much honor to that gentleman, that I cannot refrain from going a little out of my way to relate it.

A CURIOUS

A CURIOUS ANECDOTE.

He told Trim, " That he was once present at a masquerade in Berlin (for he was *formerly* no enemy to pleasure) at the end of which, a sister to the late King of Prussia, who had shewed particular attention to him, during the entertainment, signified that she should be glad to retire with him; which he positively refused." Upon hearing this curious story, Trim asked, if the Princess was handsome; to which the Vicar replied, that she was neither handsome nor young. Trim hopes the ungodly will not infer from hence, that the charms of youth and beauty would have made any greater impression on this holy man than ugliness and age.

Trim will now take the liberty of telling *his* story. He is sensible, that it will not possess the rich flavour and high seasoning that distinguishes the preceding, but hopes that Mr. Atkinson, (for whose edification it is principally designed) will not find it either uninteresting or uninstractive.



LE POETE SOI-DISANT,*

OR

THE MAN OF RHYMES,

A TALE.

Trim has the pleasure of knowing a gentleman in the south, who shines equally as a poet and a parson; and who, in the former capacity, is remarkable for treating his readers with the language and melody of the sixteenth century. This poet frequently did Trim the honour to call on him and entertain him with his productions. One morning, after having been regaled, as usual, with many delicacies, Trim observing *Waller* upon the table, asked the poet if he had read that author; to which he replied that he had not: Trim requested him to take the book with him, observing, that it was well worthy his perusal; but could not prevail. Surprised

* Trim would not have adopted the French word *Soi-disant*, &c. if he could have found a word in the English language equally expressive. It means a person who, in his own opinion, is a very great poet, but who, in the opinion of every one else, has not the least pretention to that title. He has borrowed it, in some degree, from Marmontel, who, in his tale of *Le philosophe soi-disant*, exhibits an admirable picture of a philosopher of the same happy disposition.

ed at this refusal, which he thought argued want of curiosity as well as taste, he pressed him much to take the book, on which this gentleman answered, with much gravity, that "he never read any poetry but *his own* :* Yet this gentleman was not unuseful in his generation ; for, living in a populous town in Gloucestershire, he employed himself in composing epitaphs for every one who had the happiness to die, or be buried in his parish. In passing through the churchyard he has frequently observed to Trim, with much self-complacency, that he believed his works occupied more ground than those of any poet, ancient or modern.

Trim saw him last summer, and was told by him, that he was, now, engaged in a capital work ;—that he had translated *Propria quæ maribus* into English verse, and had made some progress in *As in presenti*. Thus this gentleman, by prudently following the great critic's rule,

d 3

Consule

* This, Trim believes, was strictly true ; as he never discovered the least trace of reading in any of his productions. Yet this gentleman, though his compositions had no resemblance to any thing, either ancient or modern, never disgraced his writings with *bad English*, but afforded evident proof, that he was superior to the water-poet and had learned his *accidence*.

Consule quid valeant humeri, quid ferre recusent ;

and employing himself on subjects fuitable to his genius, not only escapes derision and contempt, but merits some degree of commendation for his endeavours, at least, to be useful.

It is with reluctance Trim quits these pleasing subjects for dull and unprofitable criticism ; but

—————*Vocat ingenti clamore Cithæron,
Taygetique canes.*

He, therefore, proceeds to introduce to the reader the four other pastorals, which complete the works of this ingenious poet. They are intitled Suspense, Disappointment, Hope, and Despair ; and Trim begs leave to premise, that, though Lord Lyttleton and Mr. Shenstone have written on these subjects, they have left nothing, that, for novelty of sentiment and simplicity of stile, can be compared to these *morceaux délicieux*. It is generally believed, that, in these pastorals, the author describes *his own* situation and feelings ; which, by giving life and reality to the scene, makes it much more interesting and affecting.

PASTORAL

PASTORALS.

SUSPENSE.

THE author begins this pastoral with the following lines,

“ For once more my fond heart shall now dare
 “ to rejoice,
 “ Since my Lucy again I shall see.”

The reader will naturally ask if Lucy is risen from the dead, as mention was made, in the preceding page, of her being carried to her grave: perhaps the poet means another person of the same name; but I submit to him, whether it will not be proper, in the next edition, to remove this doubt, by substituting a different appellation. He goes on,

“ And she sure will not suffer to languish in pain
 “ A poor heart that’s so constant and true;
 “ But with tender compassion will look on her
 “ fwain,
 “ And her *former endearments* renew.”

So it seems, that, though our author is *now* in a
 d 4 state

state of suspense, with respect to his mistress's affections, he has *formerly* had the happiness of being distinguished by her endearments. Mr. Atkinson's lady, the reader will observe, is of a very singular disposition; for when ladies have proceeded so far as to *confer* endearments on their lovers, it may reasonably be supposed, that the season of cruelty and coyness is passed, and that they will have no objection to receive* those favours,* which they had, formerly, the generosity to bestow.

Our ingenious author proceeds,

" Amidst all the young shepherds that play'd on
" the green,

" Not a youth was so happy as I ;

" But

* Trim has made use of the word *receive*, because he believes gentlemen, in general, think themselves sufficiently honoured if ladies will condescend to receive favours : but this, the reader will observe, is quite contrary to Mr. Atkinson's doctrine and practice ; for he represents the ladies, on all occasions, as *agents*, and the other sex as passive. Lucy, it seems, is to *renew* her endearments, and Mr. Atkinson, with bashful modesty, to receive them. If this gentleman should succeed in his endeavours to spread through the kingdom this wicked and abominable heresy, (for such it may justly be esteemed in love matters) adieu, for ever, to the decency, modesty, and refined delicacy of the English ladies, which have, hitherto, been their characteristic and brightest ornaments.

"But of late, lost in love, I have negligent been,

"And almost even wanted to die."

The reader will observe, in the line,

"But of late, lost in love, I have negligent been,"

a beautiful improvement on Virgil's,

*Ab Corydon, Corydon! quæ te dementia cepit?
Semiputata tibi frondosa vitis in ulmo est.*

The Latin poet plainly tells us *what* his shepherd had been negligent of; but the English poet very politely pays a compliment to the sagacity of the reader, by leaving him to discover it.

"And almost even wanted to die."

How expressive is the word *almost*, denoting the irresolution of the shepherd, and intimating that, notwithstanding the violence of his passion, he is not *quite* distracted, but possesses a sufficient degree of fortitude and discretion to preserve him from hanging or drowning.* How cold, after this sentiment,
appears

* Our author displays great knowledge of human nature in not representing himself in a greater degree of anxiety and unhappiness. For to have represented himself in a state of frenzy and
quite

appears the shepherd's exclamation in the Latin poet,

Nil nostri miserere? mori me denique coges?

Then follows,

"For it seem'd like a folly to think one so fair,
 "One so handsome, so *young*,* so divine,
 "Would e'er mix in my griefs, or my happiness
 "share,
 "Or to hear my fond tales would incline."

A fine imitation of a verse in Colin's Complaint,

"To

quite determined to destroy himself for a girl, whose endearments he had already received, would have been unnatural; there being no instance upon record (among the many foolish things love has caused) of any one putting an end to his existence, who had *once* been favoured with the endearments of his mistress.—Had Orestes possessed Hermione; or, to come to a case more in point, the Rev. Mr. Hackman Miss Ray, it is probable his frenzy would have been at an end.

* The attentive reader will take notice that Mr. Atkinson mentions the *youth* of his mistress, and says it was folly 'to think one so *young* would his happiness share, &c. Trim requests the reader to keep this circumstance in his mind, because it will make the future business of the pastoral appear much more natural; as it does not seem probable that Mr. Atkinson could have taught any but a very *young* girl the ingenious tricks and manœuvres we shall see practised hereafter.

- “ To think that a beauty so gay,
 “ So kind and so constant would prove ;
 “ Or go clad like our maidens in grey,
 “ Or live in a cottage on love.”

The reader will observe, with pleasure, the superior melody and softness of our poet, as well as the superior beauty of *his* mistress, whom the epithet *divine* raises far above the earthly object of Colin's vows and adoration.

He proceeds,

- “ Neither could I my vanity flatter so far,
 “ As to hope a return to my sighs ;
 “ Yet I cannot their rising attempt to debar,
 “ Nor the languor drive out of my eyes.”

The critical reader must be struck with the novelty of the word *debar* in this passage : I can venture to assert that this is the first time the rising of sighs was *debarred* ; but, as the expression comes from a gentleman remarkable for his knowledge of the English language, and who is, generally, as correct in his poetry as his prose, it cannot reasonably be objected to.

- “ Nor the languor drive out of my eyes.”

A

A common poet would have said,

Nor the languor drive out of my heart ;

but our bard, knowing that what is doing in the heart is generally discoverable in the eye, by a happy metaphor, has made the latter the seat of love. But here we have a personal allusion, which perhaps, the reader is not aware of ; for the poet himself is remarkable for the melting languor of his eye, and they, who have had the pleasure to see him perform the duties of his sacred function, (which he does with the most graceful dignity) must have been struck with the mild, but irresistible lustre of those radiant orbs.

Mr. Atkinson concludes with saying of himself and his mistress,

“ When absent all pleasures we equally hate,
“ And indeed we are equally true.”

The reader will wonder how Mr. Atkinson can be in a state of *suspense*, when his mistress is as true and constant as himself. This, it must be owned, is an inconsistency ; but men of genius, hurried along by a warm imagination, are apt to overlook these trifles : besides, there is as much ingenuity in writing
pastorals,

pastorals, which will suit any titles, as in composing *sermons* adapted to any text. If we reverse the titles, and for Suspense, Hope, Disappointment, and Despair, take Despair, Disappointment, Hope, and Suspense, and read the pastorals under these titles, we shall find that they are so dexterously contrived as not to lose, by this arrangement, the smallest portion either of connection or propriety.

DISAPPOINTMENT.

THIS pastoral is very short, and, of course, our author's disappointment is soon at an end. What was the cause of it I cannot discover; the object of his passion not once being complained of, or even mentioned in it: but he exclaims very pathetically,

“ Oh! let me in solitude wander alone,
 “ Nor think me accountable why;
 “ A pilgrim I'll travel my sins to atone,
 “ Then lay my poor head down and die.”

The poet, the reader will observe, says, that he will not tell us *why* he rambles alone, but, immediately after, recollecting that keeping the reader in suspense may perhaps grieve him, he kindly reveals his design, by declaring that it is to make an atonement for his sins.— What sins? The reader from hence will

will suspect that *he*, and not the damsel was the cause of the disappointment; because, had she been the finner, in this case, it would have been more proper to have recommended to *her* to fly to solitude and make atonement for her crimes,

“ Then lay my poor head down and die.”

The bare intimation of such a misfortune must fill the reader with consternation, as, he will not be willing to part with a head, which is so great an ornament to the literary world, and has contributed so much to his entertainment. He then proceeds, in the same melancholy strain, to say,

“ And surely some poet will write in my praise,

“ And sooth my pale wandering ghost;

“ Will sing me to rest by the help of his lays,

“ And say a choice friend we have lost.”

I am sorry to hear a poet, whose language, in general, is so warm and impassioned, talk so coldly of the powerful effects of his art. Was there nothing to be had but common *help* from a poet's lays? no charm for grief, no melody, no music?

“ Will sing me to rest——”

It is impossible to read these words without having
before

before our eyes a *cradle, with a lovely babe in it (one of those charming little creatures Mr. Atkinson is so fond of describing) and a good old woman singing it to rest by the help of a lullaby; a happy assemblage of images, which, united with great art by the poet, form a pleasing conclusion to this charming pastoral.

HOPE.

THIS pastoral opens with language, which will give the reader infinite pleasure, as he will learn from it that the poet's *poor head* is perfectly safe, and his heart as light as a feather.

“ Tho’ her prudence long made me despair,
 “ And fancy my love was unkind;
 “ Yet her smiles now, have soothed my care,
 “ And eased the doubts of my mind.”

If it was the *prudence* of the young lady which threw
 Mr.

* When the reader comes to see what passed between Mr. Atkinson and Lucy, he will suspect that a *cradle* was likely soon to be wanted; and no doubt it would, if this gentleman (to make use of the Vicar's emphatical expression) had not been particularly *fortunate*. See P. 70.

Mr. Atkinson into a fit of despair, we cannot, with propriety, blame *her*. The reader will observe, that he does not complain either of her cruelty, or her coyness; and, indeed, he had no reason, as the lady, he has told us, had *formerly* honoured him with endearments: but he complains of her prudence in not *renewing*, or perhaps, adding to the warmth and tenderness of those endearments.* Trim cannot help adding, that it does Mr. Atkinson no honour to complain of the *discretion* of his mistress; but we shall soon see that he had little ground even for this complaint, the young lady having sacrificed that, and every other consideration both of delicacy and decency, for this gentleman's entertainment.

He proceeds, in the same strain of rapture,

“ Together we'll traverse life's stage,

“ We'll laugh and be merry through youth;

“ And

* Denham tells us that

“ ————poets were the first divines;”

but Trim is sorry to add that very few poets, in the present age, have any divinity about them, and, what is worse, some divines, who are poets, instead of employing the sacred gift they have received, either in the cause of virtue or religion, make use of the little talents they possess to inflame the passions, corrupt the heart, and lead mankind to vice and wretchedness.

“ And whenever declin’d into age,
 “ We’ll think of past pleasures and truth.”

Not content with this beautiful representation of the soft amusements of age, the poet treats us with another fine picture descriptive of the same happy season:

“ When the taper of life seems to fail,
 “ And youth wanders fast from our view;
 “ When your roses, my Lucy, turn pale
 “ For want of its fostering dew.”

The images here represented, it must be owned, are equally new and delightful; but there is a fault in this passage, which I believe the ingenious author was not aware of. To make the last line grammatical, or, in any degree, English, the word *its* should be *their*. As Mr. Atkinson seems totally unacquainted with matters of this kind, it may not be improper to state and examine the passage for his benefit. The roses, he says, will fade for want of *its* fostering dew. Mr. Atkinson will observe that roses being in the plural number, the pronoun *its*, which is singular, cannot, consistently with the rules of grammar, be applied to it, and that, therefore, the pronominal adjective *their* must be called in and

e

employed

employed :* but if Mr. Atkinson has any particular attachment

* It gives Trim concern to administer this kind of correction to a *Master of Arts*; but it is some consolation to him, in the exercise of this disagreeable office, to reflect, that they are not children of the same *alma mater*, and that Cambridge and not Oxford produced this degenerate *son*. May we not, with propriety ask Mr. Atkinson's *mother*, in the words of Cowley,

*Tunc tui poteris vocem hic agnoscere nati
Tam male formatam, dissimilemque tuæ ?*

Yet, notwithstanding Mr. Atkinson's ignorance of these matters, if he had behaved with any degree of propriety, or decency, on a certain occasion, no vestige of bad English would have been suffered to remain in the essays. When he delivered the M. S. into the hands of his printer, who is no less distinguished by his professional knowledge than a liberality of sentiment that would do honour to any profession, the latter, in the most polite manner, took the liberty of pointing out a passage, which to him appeared ungrammatical. Mr. Atkinson's answer was " Shall a puppy of a printer tell a man of *my* education what is, and what is not grammatical ?"—The printer had more manners than to contradict this excellent scholar, but observing a gentleman of the same profession passing by, who is as much superior to Mr. Atkinson in learning as every other liberal accomplishment, he proposed, with great deference to Mr. Atkinson, to consult him on the propriety or impropriety of the passage in question. This was sullenly assented to by Mr. Atkinson; and this gentleman, having viewed the passage in a separate room, declared, with a tone of voice very audible to his rev. brother, that the passage *was* ungrammatical, and added, that he hoped there was no man fool enough to think of publishing such nonsense.

attachment to the word *its*, and wishes to preserve it, he must be content with a single rose, which then may fade, with propriety, for want of *its* fostering dew.

“ When your roses, my Lucy, turn pale

“ For want of *their* fostering dew.”

What the poet means by fostering dew, I cannot discover. I conjecture, but with great diffidence, that he means that her eyes, not being so full of moisture as in her younger days, tears of joy (for her lover would not wish to see any other) will no longer trickle down her cheek and water the roses that grow there; for want of which they will wither and die. The poet adds,

“ Then a wish unto heaven I'll raise,

“ A wish which must call forth a sigh;

“ When we've liv'd to the end of our days,

“ That then we together may die.”

Lord Lyttleton has the same sentiment, but expressed very differently, and with much less simplicity:

“ When time no longer will thy beauties spare,

“ And only Damon's eyes shall think thee fair,

“ Then may the gentle hand of welcome death

“ At one soft stroke deprive us both of breath!”

DESPAIR.

MR. Atkinson begins this pastoral with an intimation, that he has experienced a melancholy reverse of fortune; and he laments his loss in notes so sad, and yet so tuneful, that, like Virgil's nightingale, bemoaning the loss of her young, he makes us sympathize with him in his grief, and join in his melodious lamentation.

" Ah come, my companions so dear,

" Attend to your Corydon's woe.

" Sure friendship will drop the sad tear,

" A balm the most pleasing below."

He then proceeds (like Sapho in Ovid) to describe the delicious pleasures he lately experienced, and, it must be confessed, that he does it *con amore*; and that neither Ovid or Catullus have produced any thing so exquisitely soft and voluptuous. The following stanza can hardly be read without emotion.

" Her lips that with cherries do vie,

" To mine I have ardently press'd;

" While often I've cry'd, with a sigh,

" Sure shepherd was never so blest'd."

The

The reader will observe that the poet is getting into his element, and will soon see him shine in meridian splendor, and communicating to his readers meridian heat. He that has attended *St. Preux* to the *bosquet*, and seen *le baiser de l' amour* given and returned, with *sang froid*, being one of those happy beings, who has

“ No pulse that riots, and no blood that glows,”

may go on with safety, otherwise Trim advises him, for his own sake, *retourner sur ses pas*.

*“ She kifs'd me, 'twas pleasure divine,

“ As softly her bosom did rise;

e 3

“ In

* Catullus has a passage somewhat similar to this

— *Acme leviter caput reflectens*

Et dulcis pueri ebrios ocellos

Illo purpureo ore suaviata.

The reader will observe, that the behaviour of *Acme* is remarkably like that of *Lucy*, (as indeed *Mr. Atkinson's* was like that of *Septimius*) but then it must be considered, that the former was the professed mistress of a heathen poet, the other the modest companion and intended wife of a christian divine.

“ In motions alternate to mine ;

“ Alternate were each of our sighs.”

Wishing to preserve, as much as possible, the character of an impartial critic,

“ Inclined to praise, but not afraid to blame,”

I cannot refrain from condemning lines, which I am sure *Peter Pindar* would blush to own, and which come, with great impropriety from a clergyman, who ought to be a pattern of chastity to others, both in his writings and conversation. It is unnecessary to observe, to one sex, what must have been Mr. Atkinson's thoughts and sensations, when he wrote these luscious lines, and a due regard to the delicacy of the other will not permit me to explain them. It requires no great portion of sagacity to discover, that an intimacy of a very particular kind must have subsisted between this gentleman and his mistress, before she could be prevailed on to kiss *him*, and put herself into the situation alluded to: that the painting is warm and affecting I am ready to allow, and will add, that a representation of a nocturnal scene in *Drury Lane*, or *Covent Garden*, was never
given

given in colours more glowing or inflammatory.*

Yet

* It will be curious information to the rev. author of the essays, that a society of choice spirits, not a hundred miles from Leeds, have made a song of the two last-mentioned stanzas, and that they are regularly sung at their meetings, under the title of the *Parson's Catch*. Trim heard them one night; and, as the tune was an excellent one, and the voice good, he was much entertained. He observed no alteration in the words, but that instead of bosom in the second stanza, these wicked wags had substituted another beginning with the same letter, a little more facetious, but not at all more indecent. Trim observed to the company, that the words, at present, had not much the appearance of an air or catch, though the singing and tune made them pass for such; but that, with the alteration of a single line, they would make an excellent one. Trim *uno ore* was called upon to give his assistance on this important occasion, and, as he has, sometimes, a tolerable knack at a rhyme, he wrote as follows.

I kifs'd her, joy shone in her eye,
Her lips too I ardently prefs'd,
While often I cry'd with a sigh
Sure shepherd was never so blefs'd!
I kifs'd her.

She kifs'd me, 't was pleasure divine,
As softly her bosom did rise
In motions alternate to mine;
Alternate were each of our sighs.
She kifs'd me.

The alteration was loudly applauded, the song repeated, then *encored*; and is likely to be a standing dish at the jovial meetings of these *bons vivants*.

Yet, reader, (mark the propriety and consistency of the poet) only ten lines above, this indulgent and good natured girl is represented

“ So modest, you’d think her afraid
 “ The being of love to suppose.”

It appears, from what we have already seen, that Mr. Atkinson soon stripped this blushing damsel of the troublesome robe of modesty, and taught* her to kiss him with all the freedom and lasciviousness of a *filles de joie*.

He

* Trim laments much, that these essays did not appear a few years sooner, when Lord S. was in power; as, next to the Essay on Woman, it is probable, no essays would have been more agreeable to his Lordship’s palate. It is probable too, that though *Anti-Sejanus* had well studied *the Art of rising in the Church*, that our author, as the Priest of Pleasure and Epicure in Love-matters, would have been a much greater favourite with his Lordship, and that *Simonburne* would have fallen into different hands.—Suppose the rev. author was to dedicate the next edition to the Prince of Wales? There are some passages, which his Royal Highness might read, without impropriety, to Mrs. Fitzherbert; and, from which that lady might receive some useful hints and information. How happy is our author in having written a book, that may be useful to all ranks of people, from the peasant to the *Prince*!

He goes on,

“ Her fondness was constant to me,
 “ I’ve kiss’d the pink roses that grow,
 “ ’Midst lilies as sweet as can be,
 “ Nurs’d up in her bosom of snow.”

What the poet means by roses that grow in her bosom, I cannot discover. He cannot mean real roses, because they could not *grow* there; and, if by pink roses, he meant to represent the colour and complexion of her bosom, he has given it a tint neither natural nor attracting: besides he talks of her bosom of *snow*. The reader will, doubtless, admire the ingenuity of this gentleman, who, having found a bosom of snow, could so soon warm and melt the cold, but pretty mountains it was composed of. But the method he adopted was so judicious, that it could scarce fail of producing a due effect. It was his practice, he says, to kiss her bosom, (a liberty, it seems, this good-natured damsel never objected to) and, as his kisses were warm, the good effects of this mode of proceeding were soon felt.*

After

* Mr. Atkinson tells us, with great gravity, in his preface, that he wrote these essays “ to encourage some of the best feelings of
 our

After the sweet embrace, so feelingly described in the lines,

“ She kifs’d me, ’twas pleasure divine,
“ As softly her bosom did rise, &c.”

they separate, the amorous damsel exclaiming,

“ My bosom shall heave but for you ;”

alluding, no doubt, to its late delicious and alternate motions, which, probably, had not, yet, quite subsided. Yet, reader, (mark again the propriety and consistency of the poet) in the very next stanza, Mr. Atkinson cries out,

“ The

our nature.” What kind of feelings they are calculated to encourage, and what Mr. Atkinson thinks are our *best feelings*, the reader, I fear, will be at no loss to determine. Trim knows a lady, who strictly forbid her daughter to read the Poetical Essays ; but, on inquiry, he found, that the young lady, having been told that the fruit was pleasant to the taste and a thing to be desired to make one *wife*, had, unfortunately, eaten, before she received her mamma’s prudent prohibition. Trim fears, that this forbidden fruit had the same effect on the young lady, which, Milton tells us, the other had on her great grandmother ; and that *she* felt, likewise,

“ New desires and inclinations strange,
“ Till then unknown.”

" The sex I for ever muſt hate,
 " Since Lucy is changeable found;
 " Yet let me not rail at my fate,
 " For conſtancy few are renown'd."

Whence could ſo ſudden and unexpected a change ariſe in a girl, whoſe boſom, according to her own confeſſion, was the ſole, excluſive property of Mr. Atkinſon, (who indeed treated it as ſuch on all occaſions) and of whom this gentleman had ſaid a few lines above,

" Her fondneſs was *conſtant* to me."

It ſeems probable, that the poor girl, on finding that Mr. Atkinſon expected her to court and careſs *him*, and that ſhe had much trouble and little pleaſure for her pains, left this cold and haughty ſwain for a kinder and more indulgent lover.* Mr. Atkinſon, thus deſerted, exclaims

" The

* What a fine ſubject for the pencil of Mr. Bunbury would the laſt interview between Mr. Atkinſon and Lucy afford! Much more impaſſioned than that of Charlotte and Werter, and attended with *peculiar* circumſtances of tenderneſs, it would give that ingenious artiſt an opportunity of diſcovering new graces, and acquiring additional applauſe. How much is it to be wiſhed that Mr. Bunbury would turn his attention to the works of Richardſon and

“ The sex I for ever must hate.”

This the reader will consider as the language of passion and disappointment; because it would be unreasonable to detest many thousand amiable and good-natured girls for the fault of one inconstant and worthless. He adds,

“ For constancy few are renown'd.”

I cannot help considering this an unjust and illiberal reflection on the fair sex, who, for a single instance of inconstancy, with which *they* may be reproached, I am afraid, can produce a thousand of fickleness, broken vows, and desertion, on the other side; and, I believe every man of generosity and true gallantry will acknowledge, (whatever may have been his own hard fate) that they are much more sinned against than sinning. Mr. Atkinson concludes with saying,

“ Henceforward I'll ramble alone;”

intimating,

and Rousseau.—*There* he would meet with scenes and situations worthy of his genius and great abilities. I would recommend to him *pour le coup d'essai*, to attempt the scene of the *bosquet*, which will afford him an opportunity of displaying his wonderful powers of expression, in delineating the amorous benevolence of *Julie*, the trembling gratitude of *St. Preux*, and the concurring tenderness of the *inseparable Confine*.

intimating, no doubt, that he means to die a bachelor, or, in the language of poetry, to remain

“ Without a hive of hoarded sweets,
“ A solitary fly.”

This intimation, Trim fears, will occasion a general mourning among the ladies; and, indeed, they will have reason to lament, that a gentleman, whose tender heart so peculiarly fits him for social life, and whose feelings, tremblingly alive, so eminently qualify him for connubial pleasures, should not enter into a state which he seems to be formed, both by art and nature, for the purpose of adorning and improving. But the ladies will do well to consider on what terms, and on what terms only, this gentleman will condescend to honour them with his attention. They must court and caress *him*, allow him to have free access, at all times, to their bosoms, that he may both kiss the pink roses that grow there (if the soil produces such flowers) and if he meets with two mountains of snow, that he may have the pleasure of dissolving them into tenderness and love.*

I shall

* Our moral, and, therefore, our best poet, has somewhere said,

“ Lust, thro’ some certain strainers well refin’d,
“ Is gentle love, and charms all womankind.”

Trim

I shall conclude these observations with obviating an objection that has been made by some ill natured critics to our author's works. It has been insinuated that our poet has borrowed some of his most glittering sentiments and splendid images from preceding writers. This I can affirm, with confidence, has no foundation in truth. I am tolerably acquainted with pastoral writers, both ancient and modern, and cannot find a single image, or a single sentiment that is copied or imitated from either. It is true, that he has borrowed one line from the old song of *Darby and Joan*, two from *Prior's Nutbrown Maid*, and a few more from Rowe's celebrated ballad of *Despairing beside a clear stream*. These seem to be the only poetical pieces our author has read; and, I beg leave to say, that it is a fortunate circumstance both for the poet and the public, that his reading has not been more extensive; for thus, instead of being nauseated with the same stale sentiments from classic authors, we are presented with new thoughts, dressed out in language equally new, from his own rich and creative imagination.

N. B.

Trim hopes that our rev. author will strain and purify his, before he exhibits it again either to the ladies or the public: for truth obliges him to confess, that, in the essays, he has represented a passion, which no more resembles *gentle love* than the harpies in Virgil do the Dutchess of Devonshire or the Venus de Medicis.

N. B. Since the above was written, the following *jeu d'esprit* was put into Trim's hands, written by Lady Minikin. As it seems to have been designed for the perusal of the author of the Poetical Essays, and contains remarks upon a very interesting passage in his works, Trim takes this opportunity of laying it before him and the public.

TO THE REV. WILLIAM ATKINSON.

Sir,

I GREATLY admire the natural sentiments and no less natural style of the Poetical Essays, but respectfully submit to the ingenious author, whether he has not, in one instance, departed a little from propriety of character. My reason for thinking so, sir, will appear from the following conversation.

The other morning, being at my toilet, (when, I declare, I was not thinking of him) in rushed the *Colonel, exclaiming,

“ My

* Trim supposes that her Ladyship means Col, Tivy, who, the reader, if he is acquainted with *Bon ton* or high life, will recollect, has distinguished himself as much by his attachment to Lady Minikin, as Lord Minikin by his *penchant* for Miss Tittup.

“ My lips the seal shall be, and thine the wax,
 “ While thro’ the room resound the hearty
 “ smacks ;”

and, before I was aware, the rude man——but, indeed, his air was charming, and his manner perfectly irresistible. Before I could recover my breath, “ There,” says he, “ is divinity, the second edition, improved and corrected by your humble servant ;” and a graceful bow he made.

I intended to have been angry, but was so pleased with the *latter* part of his behaviour, that a frown, that was taking possession of my face, *malgre moi*, changed itself into a smile.

The Colonel then observed, that “ the poet had represented his maiden, contrary to the natural modesty of her sex, soliciting her swain for kisses, and archly observed, that *he* thought it the highest degree of happiness to be permitted to——.”

“ No thanks, pray Colonel, when you approach, like a thief, and steal favours, you are indebted to nothing but your own assurance.”

“ But the parson’s lover, madam, was a booby, and never thought of his mistress’s inclinations; and, therefore, the poor girl was obliged to speak out, or——.”

“ I believe, Colonel, *entre nous*, the parson knows
 little

little of nature, and, I fancy with a little of your instruction——. Shall I tell him how you have improved his poetry? perhaps, he may adopt the alteration in his next edition.”

“With all my heart, madam, and tell him, from me, if he waits to be asked,——.”

“Pray, Colonel, repeat the verses, for fear I should forget them, for you know my memory is very treacherous.”

“My lips the seal shall be, and thine the wax,

“While thro’ the room resound the hearty
“smacks.——”

“Fie! Colonel, this is a repetition I did not ask for.”

“You see, madam, I am not like the Divine, I do not expect to be asked to confer a favour upon——myself.”

“You are very polite, but really, Colonel, you are so sudden in your attacks, that you do not give one time to make a tolerable defence.”

——“*Adieu! ma chere amie!*”

——“*Adieu, mon cher Colonel, toujours brave, toujours.*”——

So down stairs he went, exclaiming, as he descended,

f

“Repairs

"Repairs each smile, awakens every grace,
 "And calls forth all the wonders of her face;
 "Sees, by degrees, a purer blush arise,
 "And keener lightnings quicken in her eyes;*"

alluding, I suppose, to the business of the toilet, which, he saw, he had interrupted; and, to tell the truth, I was a strange figure, having just finished one cheek, and not begun upon the other: never, perhaps, did the white and red rose appear in more frightful opposition.

—Now, sir, let me seriously intreat you, either to adopt the alteration, proposed by the Colonel, or to expunge these lines, which are insufferable, and contain

* It may not be unnecessary to inform Mr. Atkinson, that these lines are Pope's. *En passant*, Trim laments much that this gentleman never read Pope, as he might not only have acquired some idea of versification, but much useful knowledge from a poet, who was not content with charming the ear with the sweetest numbers,

"But stoop'd to truth, and moraliz'd his song."

This benevolent application of his shining talents drew from Voltaire (who was not very lavish of praise to rival merit) the most honourable encomium that was ever bestowed on poetic genius.

L'art quelquefois frivole, et quelquefois divin,

L'art des vers est dans Pope utile au genre humain.

Au Roi de Prusse.

contain a reflection upon the sex, which, I am sure, they do not deserve; for, whatever may be our wants, we have not, yet, stooped to solicit the charity of your sex, and, I flatter myself, that, from the generosity and gallantry of the present age, it will continue to be unnecessary.

I submit the above to your consideration, and am,

Sir,

Your very humble servant,

ANNA SOPHIA MINIKIN.

ST. JAMES'S SQUARE,

AUG. 20, 1787.

P. S. I beg leave to add, that I make no doubt, sir, you are well acquainted with ancient and modern history, but am sure you will not find in either, such conduct as you have attributed to the women of this country. Such behaviour, I am confident, was never seen among any people upon earth, even the most rude and uncivilized; and not a single instance to the contrary can be produced by the greatest enemy or slanderer of the sex.—Ladies, sir, expect to be wooed, that is, to receive homage, not to pay it.

It is with reluctance I differ, at any time, in opinion with a lady; and to do it upon a subject, of which, it must be owned, a lady is the best judge, may be deemed presumption as well as rudeness; but it is my duty, as a commentator, as much to defend my author, when I think him right, as to point out either his errors or defects.

I agree with her ladyship, that our poet is a little singular in making his females kiss their swains; but, it should be remembered, that he represents them in a state of wild and ungoverned nature, in which, it was likely for each to take, without hesitation, what they were impatient to possess. Her ladyship objects, that history furnishes no instance of such conduct, and that the fair sex have a natural coyness, that must be wooed, among the most rude and unpolished nations. I am ready to acknowledge that such objection is founded in propriety and truth; but I am happy, notwithstanding, in having it in my power to defend my author, and shall produce an instance, or rather what the lawyers call a case in point, which seems to have escaped the penetration of our fair critic, and which, I make no doubt, will justify him, in the eyes of all reasonable and well-disposed ladies. The gentlemen, I know, are not displeased with him: they are, naturally,
advocates

advocates for the innovation our author wishes to introduce; and would be glad, after having solicited so long, to be solicited in turn.—The case I allude to is the conduct of the ladies of *Otaheitee*,* who honestly make known their wants; and, adepts in the art of wheedling, take upon themselves the pleasing office of courting and caressing.

f 3

This

* Now the residence of the Queen of Love,

*Quamque Venus fertur terris magis omnibus unam
Post habita coluisse Papho: hic illius arma,
Hic currus.*

It is remarkable, that the French and English, who have visited this island, differ in the name they give it; the one calling it *Otaheitee*, the other *Taiti*. It is much to be wished that his Majesty, who is fond of promoting useful discoveries, would send out some eminent linguist to ascertain this important point. If Trim had the honour of his Majesty's ear, he would recommend to him a certain Fellow of Jesus' College, Cambridge, who has distinguished himself no less by his skill in languages than the great improvements he has made in pastoral poetry. There that gentleman would have an opportunity of encouraging his *best feelings* and gratifying the warm desires of a voluptuous heart, which, he fears, this country, from the coldness of its climate, and the coyness of its women, gratifies very imperfectly. After a short residence, he may translate into the language of *Otaheitee* his sweet, delicious, and irresistible representation of the pleasures of love; which, like a net, would soon draw to him all the beauty, and all the lasciviousness of the country.

This instance, I must own, is an *unique*, but on that account, was more likely to attract our poet's attention. Besides, this delicious island had several times been visited before our poet wrote; and a custom so singular and pleasing, was likely to make an impression on a heart remarkable for its softness and susceptibility.* If the reader will benevolently suppose the scene to be Otaheitee, and the performers natives of that country, every objection will be removed, every impropriety disappear. Indeed to put an end to all doubts, whether the picture, exhibited in the essays, contains a just representation of the disposition and manners of the women of *this* country, I humbly recommend to the author, to advertise the next edition of this ingenious work, in the following, or similar terms.

SOUTH-

* It is remarkable, that gentlemen of a certain sect, are distinguished as much by the peculiar tenderness of their hearts, as the superior warmth of their inclinations. This is ingeniously accounted for by Dr. Robertson, who observes, that "religious enthusiasm leads to sensual gratifications; the same constitution, that is susceptible of the former, being remarkably prone to the latter.—" Hist. Charles 5. vol. 2. p. 355. 4to. edit.

SOUTH-SEA ECLOGUES,

OR

A PASTORAL DIALOGUE

BETWEEN

OMIAH, a Native of Otaheitee, and his Mistress AMATAABO.

To which will be added,

A

DESCRIPTION

of a

FETE AMOUREUSE,

far superior to any

FETE CHAMPETRE

ever exhibited in this Country,

in which

will be represented

A

TETE-A-TETE

between

The Author and *Lucy,

à la mode d' Otabeitee.

f 4

This

* It is somewhat extraordinary, that our author, who has taken care to display both the modesty and delicacy of his mistress to the greatest advantage, has not given us a description of her person. What a subject would a fine woman have been for the sportive pencil and bright colours of so excellent a painter! As it is said to be a *real* character and no phantom of the imagination, our curiosity is awakened and we are anxious to discover this modern *Sappho*. The poet indeed has told us that her bosom is *red*; which

is

This advertisement will, naturally attract the attention of the public, and, probably, awaken some of their *best feelings*. Besides, the pastorals will derive two advantages from appearing in this form. The forward advances and lasciviousness of the women, will, then be perfectly in character; and the bad English, which appears now and then, will be natural and excusable, as it cannot be expected, that Omiah, during his short residence in this country, could make himself completely master of the language.

APPEN-

is a remarkable circumstance: I wish he had mentioned the colour of her hair: probably that is *red* also. These circumstances, if attended to, may perhaps lead to a discovery. In the mean time, it may not be useless to add, that a friend of mine thinks he has discovered who *Lucy* was; and as the thought is, at least, ingenious, I shall mention it, and leave the public to judge of its probability.

By *Lucy*, he says, is meant *Lucy Cowper*, who, at the time these pastorals were written, was at the head of her profession, and frequently went down to Newmarket, which is in the neighbourhood of Cambridge; that it is probable that Mr. Atkinson met with her there, and that she sat to him for the picture exhibited above. He adds, in confirmation of this opinion, that *Lucy* was remarkable for a ruddy bosom, and was nick-named by her acquaintance the *Little Redbreast*.

This is *his* account; to which Trim will add, that, if this *was* the case, all that passed between this amorous couple, was perfectly natural, and in character.

A P P E N D I X,

containing

TRIM'S LETTERS TO THE REV. WILL. ATKINSON;

accompanied with a

NARRATIVE,

and illustrated with

Notes and Observations.

THE year 1786 was remarkable for the New Doctrine delivered in the West-Riding of the County of York, by the Rev. William Atkinson, which added Card-Playing and Dancing to the sins expressly forbidden in the Old and New Testament. His observations on these subjects, simple and unscriptural as they were, Trim observed made some impression on the fair part of his audience, whose salvation seems to be the peculiar object of this feeling and tender-hearted man. Some ladies scrupled to play; others began to doubt, whether they could touch, without pollution, what Mr. A. had distinguished by the coarse, but alarming appellation of the *devil's books*.

To

To check the further growth of this dangerous heresy, and to extract, if possible, the thorns, which Mr. A. had, inconsiderately, planted in some tender bosoms, Trim wrote the following card. He took the liberty of assuming the name and character of a lady, because he thought her admonitions and her preaching would be more efficacious than his own; and he hopes he has made *his* virgin say nothing unbecoming either the modesty or delicacy of her sex. Mr. William Atkinson, Trim is sorry to observe, handles *his* maidens in a very different manner. Though the subject of his pastorals was pure, uncorrupt nature, and required; that his females should be represented with all the timorous coyness of their sex, or, at least, reluctant willingness, yet this good man, led astray, perhaps, by the warm sensations of his own tender heart, has made them all *filles de joie*, demanding kisses, soliciting embraces, and fit only to administer to the coarse enjoyments of the methodist, or the voracious appetite of a modern enthusiast.*

Maria,

* Coxe tells us, that, in Russia, no man is allowed to take orders, till he is married, because the scripture has expressly said, *let the deacon be the husband of one wife*. It is much to be wished, that no person was admitted within the pale of methodism, till he

Maria, to the Rev. William Atkinson.

MARIA presents her compliments to Mr Atkinson, and was sorry to hear him, in one of his late pious effusions, declaim so warmly against dancing and card-playing. Is there any commandment against either? or is there any thing immoral, or unbecoming in being engaged, occasionally, in such amuse-

was placed in the same happy situation, as, in all probability, the private mode of catechising (see p. 18) would be, then, less practised, and the young gentlemen of this holy profession would be less eager to awaken and encourage the *best feelings* of the other sex. It is worthy of observation, that, since Lady Huntingdon has been at the head of this pious sect, the number of its members has rapidly increased. It is owing, no doubt, to the eagerness and activity, with which men of warm and tender hearts, naturally engage in the service of a fair and generous mistress. It is said, that this enterprising woman, is about to plant a colony of young methodists in Brussels, which Trim rejoices at, as it will, probably, be the means of lessening the number of extempore and illiterate preachers in this country. If her ladyship will but lead those industrious bees to flowery fields and clear streams, Trim makes no doubt they will soon fill their hives with honey for their future comfort and support.—If the reader wishes to form an accurate idea of this extraordinary woman, Trim refers him to her archetype *Madame Pernelle*, in the *Tartuffe* of Moliere.

amusements? Cannot a person* be a good christian, and perform all the duties of one seriously and conscientiously, and yet appear, sometimes, at a card table, and, now and then, at an assembly? But Mr. A. perhaps, has no *taste* for such amusements. Is that any reason he should condemn those who have? Has he not *his* amusements; and, are *they* more rational, or innocent than cards or dancing? He is said to be fond of shooting and hunting; but is depriving poor harmless animals of their lives, merely for *his* sport and amusement, more rational, or innocent, than card-playing or dancing? And does not his tender heart, which so often melts, or affects to melt, in the pulpit, at the recollection of *pretty little things*, feel no compassion for the poor timorous hare, pursued by her cruel enemies, till bereft both of strength and breath, she falls a prey to voracious dogs, which, frequently, tear her limb from limb, and scarce leave enough of her mangled carcase to gratify the appetite of their no less voracious

* Trim could mention a *Card-Player* in the town of Bradford, to whom to compare either the Vicar or his Curate, for sincere, unaffected piety, and true, christian charity, would be an unmerited satire on an amiable character, who does good by stealth, and wishes, as much as possible, to pass through life, without attracting either admiration or notice.

cious master?—Mr. A. too, amuses himself with writing and publishing *amorous verses*: but is this a more rational, or harmless amusement than that of cards and dancing; or more consistent with the character and dignity of a clergyman? Is not the common chit-chat of a card table, or the frivolous conversation of an assembly room, in every respect, as elevated and important as the stile and sentiments of the *Poetical Essays*; and, far less likely, by any amorous tendency, to inflame* the passions, or corrupt

* It is remarkable that Mr. Atkinson is a declared enemy to theatrical representations, of all kinds, because, he says, that, by passionate language and warm description, they inflame the passions of the youth of both sexes.

———*Risum teneatis, amici?*

That there are some *few* dramatic performances, calculated to engage the passions on the side of vice, Trim will allow; but truth obliges him to confess, that the gay *Lothario*, in the description of his amorous triumph, is far more decent than Mr. Atkinson; and the kind *Calista*, in the very moment of weakness and of willingness, displays much more female coyness than his lascivious and embracing *Lucy* (according to his own account) in a common conversation, or *tete-a-tete*. Besides the dramatic author, in his virtuous *Altamont* and chaste *Lavinia*, makes us ample amends for the frailty of *one* fair wanton, whilst the pastoral writer presents us with a barren waste (not diversified or adorned with one salutary plant) of disgusting immorality and infectious lewdness.

rupt the minds of the young or inexperienced ?

If gentlemen, or even the clergy, would pursue no amusements more criminal than cards and dancing, the world would soon be much better than it is : but preachers of a certain denomination, by unnecessary austerity, by declaiming against innocent amusements, and deterring young persons, as much as possible, from the enjoyment of *them*, drive them to the pursuit of others more private, and, generally, more criminal. The preachers of this pious sect, will not, on any account, be seen at a card table, or appear in an assembly room : but how many of them, of late years, in this part of the county, have, unfortunately, been known by their *fruits* ;*—by the
fruits

* A few weeks before this card appeared, in a conversation which Trim had with the Vicar of Bradford, this gentleman told him, that no less than *five* clergymen, in the neighbourhood of Bradford, were reported to have their maids with child ; a *misfortune*, which this good man lamented with a concern that did him honour. These men, it seems, had all affected to be methodists, i. e. men, whose lives and morals were more pure and immaculate than those of the rest of the clergy. *They* had too much piety to sit down to a card-table, or mix in the dissipation of an assembly ; and, if they had not been *unfortunate*, as the Vicar observes, that is, if the ladies had not produced bairns (one indeed twins which may be considered as a *double* misfortune) they might still have passed for men of exemplary lives and conversation. To
these

fruits of dishonourable connections, which have brought disgrace upon religion, and exposed the holy professors of it to the taunts of an insulting laity, as hypocrites and sensualists! Had the fraternity, to which they belonged, permitted them to mix in the innocent and chearful amusements of the age, these things, perhaps, had never happened. Besides, the clergy, as well as other gentlemen, have many amusements; and, if to acquire a character of extraordinary sanctity, they abstain from some, (for which, perhaps, they have little relish) they can resort to others, (which they like better) for their recreation and comfort. But the amusements which ladies can partake of, with propriety, are so very few, that he can be no friend, either to the innocence, or happiness of the sex, who wishes to deprive them of a single gratification, which, harmless to them, and injurious to no one, introduces them, frequently, to the pleasures of society, and contributes, in any degree, to make the solitary virgin state less irksome and uncomfortable.

This, from a lady's mouth, may, perhaps, raise a smile on the cheek of the ignorant and inconsiderate,

these misfortunes Trim alluded to; but it is an act of justice due to these gentlemen, to acknowledge, that, upon inquiring diligently into the matter, the charge was found to be applicable only unto three.

ate, but the man of sense and observation will commend me for laying aside false delicacy, and acknowledging a fact, which his own experience will bear testimony to, and, which, it would become the young moralist, who, with a zeal* without knowledge, is endeavouring to reform our manners, by depriving us of innocent amusements, seriously to attend to.

To conclude, with a word to, Mr Atkinson, in his own way: how free from faults ought he to be, who ventures to throw the first stone! and how wisely was it said to pastors, as well as their flocks, "Pull out the beam out of thine own eye, and then thou shalt see clearly to pull the mote out of the eye of thy brothers and sisters."

Some

* Trim begs leave to recommend to Mr. Atkinson's consideration, the following excellent observation of the present Bishop of Landaff, upon this subject; which, if properly attended to, may serve to correct the errors, into which this gentleman, and many of the same sect, have unfortunately fallen.

"Zeal," says the Bishop, "to produce its proper effect, must be founded in *knowledge*: it will, otherwise (where from peculiar temperament of body or mind it happens to exist at all) be unsteady in its operations; or, it will be tainted by *fanaticism*; and, instead of producing in every individual sober thoughts of his christian duty, it will hurry into dangerous errors the ignorant and unthinking, and excite the abhorrence of men of sense."

Preface to Theological Tracts.

Some time after, Mr. Atkinson published a letter in the Leeds Intelligencer, severely reflecting upon Trim, the contents of which are fully discussed in the following address to that gentleman. He has since said, that he wrote that letter reluctantly, and at the particular request of some friends at Wakefield; and that he did not think it would have made such a noise. So it seems, this valiant gentleman, being unwilling to advance to the attack, was pushed forward and clapped upon the back by his friends; and that, when, at last, he did venture to march forward, he did it from a presumption, that he should have the good fortune to meet with no resistance. It is scarce necessary to add, that he was sadly disappointed.

To the Rev. William Atkinson.

SIR,

AFTER having, hitherto, on all occasions, wisely represented yourself as a charitable man and a good christian, who neither thinks, nor speaks ill of any one; I am sorry to see you step forth, inadvertently, without any tolerable motive, to exhibit yourself in a very different light. You say that your reason for doing so, is to assure your friends, that you have

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not the most distant conception by whom the letters were written, which Trim, with so much confidence attributed to you.—A good man will not, wilfully, deviate from truth, and a prudent man will, for obvious reasons, carefully adhere to it. How far *you* have any pretensions either to goodness or discretion, in the present instance, will appear, beyond all contradiction, from Trim's own words.

His words were, "to better sense and superior argument, he will always listen with respectful attention, but scurrility of every kind, whether it comes from a parson or a justice, from the godly or the ungodly, will always be regarded with perfect indifference by Trim."—Pray, sir, is this a confident assertion? Trim will honestly confess, that he had his doubts whether the letters alluded to were the production of the Parson or the Justice; and, therefore, with a little more regard to truth than Mr. Atkinson has shewn, he would not venture to assert what he was not sure of. He knew that **one* letter
was

* Trim thinks it an act of justice to himself to declare, that he has proof that *two* papers in the Leeds Intelligencer, in which he was treated with the most illiberal personality, were written by the gentleman alluded to above, *before* Trim had written a syllable about, or alluded, in any degree, to *him*. One of these letters (and that a very illiberal one) Trim never saw till lately; and
though

was the production of the Justice ; and though that gentleman, without any provocation, had stepped out of his province to abuse Trim as an enemy to reformation, (merely because he said a few words about the innocence of cards, which the Justice dearly loves) yet it was with much concern, and no small reluctance he made any reply. Though in the other letters there appeared a great *family likeness*, yet Trim, whatever his suspicions were, never attributed them to Mr. Atkinson, because he charitably thought that such language and such sentiments could not come from a gentleman, who, affecting to be pre-eminently good, should be distinguished as much by the decency of his language as the meekness of his temper.—But, sir, the passage you allude to was written above two months ago ; so that it

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seems

though he has now a fair opportunity of retaliating (and Mr. B. knows he is not incapable of doing it) he chuses to remain silent, only observing, that if he had received this treatment from *any other* person, he should have adopted a very different line of conduct. He really respects Mr. B. as a well-meaning man, and an useful magistrate, but cannot refrain from adding, that few men shine, with equal lustre, in different departments. When Mr. B. attempts to eclipse the weekly eloquence of a news-paper with greater novelty of sentiment, or superior elegance of diction, *there*, Trim is sorry to observe, he fails.—But he will say no more : a hint, a word to the *wife* is enough.

seems Mr. Atkinson has been brooding, all this time, over an inoffensive paragraph, with a laudable design of extracting, if possible, some mischief from it. This is something like the behaviour of the worst character of antiquity, of whom the philosophic historian says, *odia in longum jaciens quæ re-conderet autæaque promeret.*

Mr. Atkinson says, that "The public will derive pleasure from being informed that the gentlemen, lately alluded to, have not made any answer to the false insinuations, malicious invectives, and puerile arguments of Trim." So, it seems, one of the gentlemen alluded to is *himself*, and the public is to receive pleasure from being informed that *he* has not condescended to honour Trim with an answer (*scilicet id curat populus*); and the reason, it seems, is that *his* character intitles him to esteem every man who deviates from the rules of truth and morality, unworthy of notice. There is a good deal of vanity, but not a shadow of truth or propriety in this declaration. Point out in what instances Trim has deviated from truth and morality; and the public, having the evidence before them, will then judge whether the charges are founded in fact, or are (as Trim pronounces them to be) false insinuations and malicious invectives.

But

But Mr. Atkinson proceeds to say, that "Trim may learn a lesson from not having his numerous failings exposed, which, when reduced to practice, would exhibit him in a much more amiable light than that in which he has hitherto appeared." That an exposure of any man's failings will exhibit him in a *more* amiable light, Trim never heard before; but he can assert, with confidence, that an exposure of *his* will not represent him in a *less* amiable one. As to Mr. Atkinson's expression of "failings reduced to practice," Trim does not comprehend it; because he cannot conceive that any thing, not done, or practised, can, properly, be denominated a failing; failings not being esteemed errors of the mind, but faults in conduct.

Mr. Atkinson, in his preface to the Poetical Essays, modestly told the public, that "for five years, he dedicated six months to close study and application." That he did so to very little purpose is the unanimous opinion of those few who purchased the essays; and Trim fears, that the specimen he has given of his abilities, in the Leeds Intelligencer, which, though consisting but of a few lines, is deficient in propriety of language, as well as justness of sentiment, will not add much to his literary character.

As to Trim's numerous failings, he acknowledges, with humility, that being out of the pale of methodism, *he* has no claim to the title of *immaculate*; but, in innocence of life and purity of morals, will not yield to Mr. Atkinson, or any methodist* upon earth. Trim recollects the time when even Mr. Atkinson,

* In one of the letters alluded to in the last note, Trim is told that he has called Mr. Atkinson a *methodist*, in the card signed Maria: the reader, by turning to that paper, will discover that Trim never made use of the word. What ingredients are necessary to constitute a methodist, Trim will not presume to say; for, not having been initiated into the *arcana* of that sect, he knows no more of their mysteries than he does of those of Cybele or Ceres. But he has had opportunities of observing that the most distinguishing *trait* in the members of that holy sect is a haughty opinion of their own merit, and a supercilious contempt of the inferior piety of the rest of the clergy. If this is a just criterion to judge by, in this case, Trim will venture to affirm, (and he is not afraid of being contradicted even by the partiality of a brother) that Mr. William Atkinson is a *true, genuine* methodist, in the highest degree of maturity and perfection. But Mr. B. in the letter alluded to, very politely adds, that "every fool, when he can find nothing else to say against a good man, calls him methodist." But surely this good man must have something very peculiar about him, to intitle him, in any degree, to this singular appellation. Whoever thought of styling the late Vicar of Bradford, (who was really a good man, if such ever existed upon earth) a methodist? Or, who thinks of decorating the present

Atkinson was not deemed one of the righteous; for his holy master (who, by the by, placed him in his present situation much against his will) on being asked, if Mr. Atkinson was a methodist, replied, *not so much as he could wish*; but this gentleman has, prudently, removed all his doubts, on this head, and is, therefore, honoured with his confidence and support.—And pray, sir, what is this superior being, a methodist, who thanks God, that he is not as other men are, looks down on all other christians with contempt, and, believing himself to be one of the elect, charitably, thinks all others in the road to perdition and damnation?

Trim knows *one, dux miseri gregis*, the arch-leader of a wretched flock, (to whom Mr. A. is said to look up as a model for imitation) who, notwithstanding his pretensions to extraordinary sanctity, has so little reverence for the ordinances of the church,

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that

sent Vicar of Leeds with this curious title? The sincere christian and the rational divine, will never be honoured with this illustrious distinction: it is the exclusive privilege of a few, proud, presumptuous priests, who, not satisfied with enforcing the written orders of the Deity, take the liberty of adding to them commandments of their own; and, because they are incapable of distinguishing themselves by their learning, or any honourable accomplishments, endeavour to do it, by an attachment to *trifles*, which have no influence, either on the welfare, or the salvation of mankind.

that he makes no scruple to curtail them *ad libitum*; and, who, in his dealings with mankind, has so repeatedly broken his word, and violated the most solemn engagements, that not a gentleman in the parish would *now* place a shilling in his hands, without better security than either his promises or his piety. This is no insinuation, but a plain matter of fact, to which a whole parish is ready to bear testimony, because a whole parish is injured by conduct so unchristian and unjustifiable.

Here, sir, you have failings *reduced to practice*, and a wide field is open to the man of God, for the salutary purposes, either of exhortation or reproof. Here, sir, you have an object worthy of your exertions; and if you can prevail on your friend *Demas** to be less fond of *this present world*, to do justice, and to establish some kind of conformity between his words and actions, you will gain more applause from the rational part of mankind, than by railing at a poor, thirsty manufacturer, for going, on the sabbath day, to a public house for a small portion of beer, because he has none at home; forgetting
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* It has been observed, that *Judas* would be a more proper name for this man, because he has the *bag* and *keeps* what is put therein.

our Lord's benevolent declaration, (more to be regarded than the mandate of any vicar upon earth) that *the sabbath was made for man, and not man for the sabbath.*

Before he concludes, Trim seriously exhorts Mr. Atkinson not to bring against him false insinuations, malicious invectives, and failings never reduced to practice; but, if he has heard any thing to his disadvantage, to inquire into it candidly, as a gentleman, and charitably, as a christian, and, when he can prove his allegations, to bring them to the bar of the public, in clear, unequivocal language. At that bar, Trim will, at any time, meet him. In the mean time, he advises him to think less highly of himself, and more charitably of others; because self-conceit and uncharitableness throw a shade on the brightest virtue, and are, really, more anti-christian than either card-playing or dancing:—the card-player and dancer may, possibly, be a good christian, but the proud Pharisee cannot.

TRIM.

Mr.

Mr. Atkinson tells an anecdote relative to the above letter, which is worth preserving. He says, that the Vicar of Bradford read it, for the first time, in his presence; that having perused it, with much attention, he leaped up from his chair, put it hastily in his pocket, struck this vehemently with his hand, exclaiming, with much warmth, "Blessed is he that is persecuted for righteousness' sake, for his is the kingdom of heaven!" Mr. Atkinson affected to laugh heartily at the folly and hypocrisy of such conduct; and, Trim is sorry to say, has repeatedly succeeded in making others laugh at it also. Not contented with thus making his venerable friend an object of ridicule, Mr. Atkinson has taken uncommon pains to make the world believe, that by *Demas* is meant the present worthy Vicar of Bradford, and has frequently declared in public, that the character suits him so well that no man of common sense will apply it to any other. Trim takes this opportunity to declare, that he threw out the character on the principle of *qui capit, ille facit*; that, if any person thought the cap would fit him, he might pick it up and put it on his head. Mr. Atkinson, it seems, picked it up, but, instead of putting it on his own head, very politely put it on the Vicar's; and, in this fool's cap, has exhibited his reverend friend in
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the streets of Bradford, to the no small astonishment and diversion of the inhabitants. If the Vicar wishes for evidence to convict Mr. Atkinson, either of publishing the above anecdote, or of applying the character of Demas to *him*, Trim will furnish him with a sufficient quantity, of a nature the most clear and unexceptionable. This the world naturally expects; and, indeed it is no more than an act of justice due to the character of a clergyman, which, like that of Cæsar's wife, should not only be unfilled, but *unsuspected*.

Trim takes this opportunity of mentioning two circumstances, which do great honour to this gentleman, and which, he makes no doubt, with every candid and well-disposed christian, will outweigh all the calumny and ridicule which Mr. Atkinson has very ungenerously bestowed on his friend and benefactor. Soon after he was in possession of the vicarage of Bradford, he wrote to Trim, lamenting much that he was presented to that living, but observing, in the words of an *old fashioned book*, (his own terms) that a necessity was laid upon him; and, as that was, unfortunately, the case, he should endeavour to acquire the good opinion and esteem of the parishoners, by treading in the steps of his worthy predecessor. This the inhabitants of Bradford know that
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he has invariably done, and indeed, excelled him in every thing amiable and praise-worthy. Sometime after, the Vicar told him, that he *purchased* the vicarage of Bradford, and had bid for two livings before, but could not till now meet with a tolerable bargain.* Contrasting this declaration with the former,

* Trim is sorry to add, that it has not turned out so good a bargain as was expected by the worthy Vicar, who has been shamefully deceived and over-reached in this matter. He told Trim, that the person with whom he negotiated for the purchase of the vicarage, stated it to him as capable of being made £300 per ann. whereas he receives little more than a life annuity of 100 for 1100, which it cost him. He intended, likewise, to have taken the lectureship into his own hands, to pay his Curate, as he gave out, and indemnify himself, in some degree, for the loss he had sustained; but some ill-natured persons, starting a trifling argument about the illegality and injustice of the measure, he was stopped in the execution of this laudable design. It is a matter of great consolation to good men, in the opposition made to their charitable and benevolent plans by persons of a perverse and envious disposition, that they can look forward to a place where their pious designs will never be frustrated, and where they are sure (which is seldom the case here) they will be rewarded according to their deserts.

Trim cannot refrain from taking this opportunity to congratulate the clergy, on the happy change that has, lately, taken place in the opinions of mankind. Formerly, to purchase a living was deemed

former, he was struck with the delicacy and consistency of this good man.

Another circumstance, Trim mentions with pleasure, because it will, for ever, endear him to the inhabitants of Bradford, as it shews his anxiety and concern for their everlasting happiness. As soon as he had observed in what state their spiritual affairs were, he wrote to a very distinguished character, who is at the head of the methodists, in the county of Lincoln, telling him, that he had taken possession of the vicarage of Bradford; that his Curate not being an *awakened* man, he meant to dismiss him; that the inhabitants of Bradford, were in a very dangerous state; that he should be glad of his assistance to bring them to a due sense of their danger; and that he makes no doubt, he can procure him the lectureship of Bradford, as a reward for his pious labours :

deemed *simony*; but, now, to buy one in the most open and notorious manner, and then to swear positively that you know nothing of such purchase, is esteemed perfectly consistent with the character of a gentleman and a clergyman, and a much less offence than sitting down to a whist-table, or fishing in the pool of dissipation, at quadrille. The clergy *now* (at least the most holy and godly part of them) seem to possess a happy pliability of throat, which can strain at a gnat and swallow a camel.

labours: but the Vicar having changed his mind, (no doubt for great and important reasons) sent the letter only to——TRIM.*

Yet perhaps the most remarkable *trait* in this great man's character, is that sweet vicissitude of temper, in which he not only excels all his own sex, but outdoes every thing of the *varium* and *mutabile* that adorns the other. Trim recollects hearing him on the *Tuesday* declare, that, "though he had a large stock of sermons, he was not satisfied, or pleased with himself; unless he composed one every week, for the edification of his parishoners." On the *Wednesday* calling on him, he again introduced the same subject, and declared, with great seriousness, that "he was quite tired of composing sermons, and was determined, during his life, never to write another." How justly does this amiable man merit the honourable *elogie* Horace bestows on *Tigellius*,
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* In whose hands, it still remains, where it may be seen any hour of the day, by persons not methodists, *gratis*; but gentlemen of that denomination, who wish to see so great a curiosity, will be expected to pay *one shilling*; and they, who are desirous of transcribing this *unique*, so honourable and characteristic of the piety and benevolence of this holy sect, must pay *half-a-crown*. N. B. They will be expected to pay ready money, for Trim has found, by experience, that even the *Pontifex Maximus*, the high priest of this profession, in matters of this kind, is not to be *trusted*.

nil fuit unquam sic impar sibi! Yet, this pleasing change and variation of sentiment, it must be owned, appears somewhat strange and discouraging to those who do not know him, (and indeed *miseri quibus intentatus nitet*) but to those who do, it is equally innocent and entertaining.

But I must leave this great and shining character (to whose various excellencies scarce a volume would do justice) to return to his amiable friend, who, it must be confessed, in learning and true piety, is *proximus, sed proximus longo intervallo*.

Mr. Atkinson did not attend at the bar of the public with his charges, as requested, but, soon after, inserted a letter in the Leeds Intelligencer, addressed to another person, in which he prudently took no notice of the charges, but had not the discretion to refrain from bringing fresh insinuations against Trim. Having been accused by Trim, in the face of the public, of *one falsehood*, it would have been prudent in Mr. Atkinson to have removed this imputation, before he proceeded to advance others, which, a moment's consideration would have convinced him, had not the least chance of escaping detection. But a love of truth forms no part of this gentleman's character, and that silly vanity, which is his ruling passion, induces him to think that whatever *he* says must

must pass current without either censure or examination. It may with church-wardens and constables, but men of sense are not to be deceived by specious appearances, or confident* assertions.

By

* The following is one (*et ab uno, disce omnes*) of this gentleman's confident assertions. A few weeks ago, a hand-bill was circulated in the town of Bradford, said to contain an extract from the speech of Sir Thomas Beevor, at the meeting of the magistrates of the county of Norfolk, taken from the Leeds Mercury. When it fell into Mr. Atkinson's hands, he confidently asserted, that no such words were spoken at the Norfolk meeting; that the whole was a forgery of Trim; that he had fabricated the paragraph for the Leeds paper, and, afterwards, reprinted it, in the town of Bradford, to counteract his and the Vicar's plans of reformation.—It is unnecessary to inform the public, that one part of this confident assertion was false; and Trim solemnly declares, that he never saw the extract from Sir Thomas's speech, or a single line of it, till he saw it in the hand-bill alluded to.

The effrontery and malignity of this assertion can only be equalled by a declaration made some time ago, by his venerable friend, the Vicar of Bradford, who is as remarkable as this gentleman for his charity and love of truth. He declared, in the public prints, that Trim had opposed those useful institutions, the Sunday-schools. Yet this gentleman *knew* that Trim, from the beginning, had regularly subscribed to their support, being himself the chairman of the committee which had the management of the money; a matter this good man always carefully attends to.

Have these godly men an exclusive privilege of forging falsehoods, and spreading calumny and defamation? Or has Lady Hunting-

By way of reply to these insinuations, and, to extort, if possible, the charges, or, at least, an apology for such unchristian conduct, Trim wrote the following.

To the Rev. William Atkinson.

ECCE ITERUM CRISPINUS, ET EST MIHI SÆPE VOCANDUS.

JUV.

SIR,

ANXIOUS to clear himself from every imputation, however trifling, which you, sir, in the goodness and charity of your heart, might think proper to invent, Trim would have paid due attention to your last insinuations much sooner, had it not been given out, that your friends had several compositions ready for the press, intended to do *you* honour and to entertain the public. Trim did not wish, therefore, by an unseasonable intrusion, to deprive you and them of

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Huntington (whose authority in the church is certainly as scriptural as the Pope's) issued orders, directing her holy children to keep no terms with heretics, i. e. all those without the pale of methodism, but endeavour, by every means in their power, *per fas et nefas*, to destroy their reputation, and rob them of their dearest property, their good name?

a pleasure, which it was natural for both to expect with impatience; but, as they have not yet appeared, (and probably now never will) he thinks it time to enter upon his justification.

Your words are, "On the veracity of a christian and a gentleman, I do assure you and the public, that Trim's insinuations upon that subject (card-playing) are as *false* as those respecting the writers of the letters signed Anti-Trim."—A charge of falsehood, of any kind, is to *him* a matter of a very serious nature. To you, sir, who have declared, on the veracity of a christian and a gentleman, that you never alluded, in the pulpit, to a subject, which a whole parish heard you speak of, in the most plain and intelligible manner, it seems to be an imputation that you rather wish to merit than avoid. You were *once* proud of the very conduct you now seem so anxious to have forgotten; for you told a friend of yours, that you introduced the subject of card-playing into the church, because you found it would be agreeable to the Vicar, and that he would support you in your opposition to such ungodly practices. So it seems, sir, to those of your own way of thinking, you boast of your pious efforts, but to those of a different persuasion, you deny and disown them. This, to be sure, is following the apostle's

tle's advice of *being all things to all men*; but such conduct is not very honourable, or instructive.

You complain, that Trim's insinuations about the writers of the letters signed Anti-Trim, are false. You allude, I suppose, to the Captain and yourself; but, sir, if his suspicions were groundless, why did you and that worthy gentleman take such extraordinary pains to confirm them, by treating him with the same vulgar abuse, and bringing against him the very same accusations as Anti-Trim* had

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done ?

* Trim takes this opportunity of informing the public, that he has, at last, had the satisfaction to discover that the weak, lying, and impudent letters, which appeared, from time to time, in the Leeds Intelligencer, under the signature of Anti-Trim, were conveyed to the printer by one *William Oliver*, a badger in corn, the intimate acquaintance, and confidential friend of the Vicar of Bradford. As this man cannot write, or even spell, the public will be at no loss to conjecture from what quarter they came. On hearing that Billy had conveyed these letters to the printer, Trim had application made to him, in a civil manner, to know from whom he received them. He protested, in the most solemn manner, and called God to witness, that he never did convey one of these letters to the printer; declaring, at the same time, that he knew the contents of every letter he had ever carried to him, all which were, he said, on parish business. A few days after, Billy waited on the printer, and complained bitterly of being given up and exposed. It is a fortunate circumstance for mankind, that so much profligacy attended with such a degree of impudence is rarely to be met with.

Yet

done? What were the Captain's motives for such conduct, I know not; and, out of respect to *him*, I will forbear to inquire. As to Mr. William Atkinson, Trim will honestly confess, that he had justly given *him* offence, by speaking disrespectfully of the *Poetical Essays*, which, being his first-born, it was, perhaps, natural for him (deformed and disgusting as it is) to regard with some degree of paternal pride and partiality. But, sir, it is an established maxim in this country, that every man has a right to deliver his opinion of the productions of the press; and, if by pompous titles of M. A. and fellow of a college, he finds himself cajoled out of a shilling, it is natural for him to complain. Had the work appeared with the suitable title of "Essays in Verse, by a young Gentleman of Eaton or Winchester," (though I am sure the learned master of the latter seminary would never have thought well of a boy who had written such nonsense) the book might have been overlooked, or spared, in
 compas-

Yet this person has passed, for some time, for the most holy man in Bradford, after the Vicar and Mr. Atkinson. Trim will make no further remark on the conduct of this man (to whom he wishes no other punishment than hearty and sincere repentance of his crime) but only ask,

Quid Domini facient, audent cum talia fures?

compassion to his youth. But, sir, when a grave divine tells us, in print, that he has dedicated five years to close application and intense study, we are shocked, at finding in our hands a composition totally destitute of every glimmering of learning and common sense. Trim is tolerably well versed in the poetry of this country, and will venture to assert, that nothing has been published, since the commencement of the present century, (and we are now almost at the close of it) that can be put on a level with these essays, either for stupidity of thought, or vulgarity of language. To compare them with the productions of the *Shoemaker*, whom Shenstone patronised, or those of the *Milk-woman* of Bristol, who is now entertaining her fair country-women with her rude strains, would be an act of injustice to the former, and an unmerited reflection on the other. Trim pronounces them to be a wretched compound of *bad English*, *illiberality*, and *lewdness*, totally unworthy of a scholar and a gentleman, and disgraceful, in a very high degree, to a clergyman. He speaks cautiously, and in guarded terms, and pledges himself, whenever called upon, to make good his assertions.

It is a curious circumstance, but no less true than curious, that the sermons of this popular preacher,

(as his brother affectionately styles him) are really *poetic essays*, the language of which, though not always correct, is lively, figurative, and warm, whilst his essays in verse are distinguished by nothing but the jingle of rhyme, from the most cold, coarse, and insipid prose. The graces, with which the former are delivered, no doubt, add a brilliancy to the composition, which may, perhaps, in some degree, dazzle and mislead our judgment. A whining tone of voice, with a magdalen uplifted eye, swimming in moisture, forms a powerful train of artillery, and, when pointed against the unresisting softness of female bosoms, is sure to do great and speedy execution. If these fail, like a prudent general, he has his *corps de reserve*, a group of lovely, little babes, with cherub faces, introduced with a melting description of these sweet fruits of love, which recalls soft sensations to the married dame, and kindles new ones, equally delightful, in the bosom of the unmarried, which the good man carefully improves by expressing a wish that he may, one day, have these charming objects nestling about his knees, thus conveying a modest, but comfortable intimation to the ladies, that *he* means to make an humble effort to become a father; and, that he may meet with no resistance in the execution of this laudable design, he concludes with giving a very favourable account
of

of his *own* disposition, his *own* virtues, and his *own* abilities.*

Is this, or ought this to be the language of a clergyman of the church of England; a church, which erected on the broad basis of scripture and of reason, is not afraid to expose her doctrines to the searching eye of scepticism or infidelity, and, therefore, need not have recourse to low tricks to engage the attention, or increase the number of her disciples? The advice given this popular preacher, a few Sundays ago, by a young MAN (who having

h 4

never

* Mr. Atkinson has a person peculiarly formed for attracting the attention of the fair sex, which he carefully improves by the taste he displays in drefs, &c. It is remarkable, that, when this gentleman first appeared in Bradford church, the ladies were at a loss to know, whether he had a long tail, a short tail, or no tail at all. The cause of their perplexity, it seems, was this, Mr. Atkinson had, with singular taste, divided his hair into three parts, two of which, on the sides, were short, but the middle was uncommonly long, and terminated in a point, which, at a distance, appeared not unlike a *queue*. It is an act of justice to this gentleman's person, to observe, that he is no less formidable in front than in rear, and that the former is quite as captivating, and, perhaps, more dangerous. With a waistcoat open to the navel, and a chitterling descending as far, white as snow, (a charming contrast to the surrounding fables) he presents himself to the opposite gallery with all the confidence of a *petit maitre*, sure of conquest and prepared for triumph.

never been within a hundred miles of a college, might naturally have looked up to *him* as his guide and spiritual director) did credit to the one, but was no way honourable to the other. *His* aim, he observed, was, by convincing the understanding, to make the great truths of christianity sink deep into the hearts of men, whilst *others* (the application was obvious) were idly employed in playing upon the surface, by amusing the imagination with flowery description and unprofitable rhapsodies.

These paltry farces, calculated (to borrow Mr. Atkinson's brilliant expression*) to raise the *dimple*
of

* From his discourse on Trinity Sunday, the most striking feature of which (as indeed of all his discourses) was vanity. The following is a specimen of this gentleman's manner, taken from the discourse alluded to; and, I believe, is tolerably exact.

"If I am not right in *my* opinion, *my* understanding is a very singular one indeed. Some may not be qualified to judge of this subject, (the trinity) but *my* education has enabled me to give it due consideration. When a very young man, *my* attention was particularly directed to this subject, and what *my* opinion was then, may now be seen in *my* writings."

So it seems, this enterprising young man *began* his study of divinity with the doctrine of the trinity, with which Grotius, Clarke, and Newton *ended*. If it would not be deemed presumption to give advice to so extraordinary a genius, Trim would recommend to this gentleman, carefully to examine his sermons,
and

of approbation on the cheek of the ignorant and illiterate, should be restored to their original theatres, the tabernacle and the meeting-house; but I am sorry to observe, that it is not his fault, nor that of his friend *Demas*, if the church of Bradford bears no resemblance to those honourable seminaries of fanaticism and nonsense.

I shall make no apology for these strictures, which, however severe, I am convinced are well-founded. Mr. William Atkinson has thought proper, in a public paper, to hint at Trim's deviations from morality (an insinuation as false as it is scandalous) and, in turn, Trim has taken the trifling liberty of pointing out *his* ignorance, *his* vanity, and singular mode of preaching the gospel. I should certainly make an apology to the public for troubling them with observations on a character of so little consequence to *them* as Mr. Wm. Atkinson, if that gentleman (with the vanity peculiar to himself) had not declared, in print, that the public would take a pleasure in hearing *him* defend himself against the charges which he supposed were brought against him.

and erase from every one of them the word *my*, and all other offensive egotisms; which frequently raise a smile of contempt on the cheek of the man of sense; which he fears, this vain preacher frequently mistakes for the *dimple of approbation*.

him. That pleasure he has it in his power to indulge the public with, at present; and Trim politely invites him not to neglect so favourable an opportunity. When Mr. Wm. Atkinson makes an apology (which his brother* justly thinks should be as public as the charges) for his unchristian and uncharitable conduct, Trim will let *his* foibles, and *his* follies escape without observation. Till then, whenever he has an hour to bestow, by way of relaxation, on a trifling object, he may depend upon hearing from

TRIM.

It is an act of justice due to Mr. Atkinson to observe, that he declares, positively, that he never made use of the words attributed to him, in the last
note,

* It has been observed, that Trim was once in a very desperate situation, having the two Brothers upon him at a time, and that he was very fortunate in escaping so well as he did: but Trim begs leave to observe that though in the field single and unsupported, he would not have retreated before the *adelpi*; for, however he may respect both the skill and courage of the veteran, he looks on the younger brother as a *raw recruit*, who, though he boasts of having been five years in the service, has not, yet, learned to handle his arms with any degree of gracefulness, or dexterity.

note, relative to the trinity, and that, if any persons entertain doubts of it, they may see his sermon; but it is necessary to add, that no one, hitherto, has seen it. In reply to this declaration, Trim affirms that he heard him make use of these words; that he committed them to paper in less than half an hour after they were delivered; that, not depending on his own memory, (which, however, is a tolerably good one) he shewed them to two gentlemen, whose memories are remarkably retentive, who declared that they were given *verbatim*, and objected to Trim's modest intimation of their being only *tolerably exact*.

Mr. Atkinson, the reader will observe, referred his congregation for his opinion of the trinity, to his *writings*, and yet has published nothing but the Poetical Essays; so that, if the words have any meaning, we are to search for the trinity amidst the lasciviousness and lewd images exhibited in that ungodly publication.*—And what has this gentleman learned

* Trim has frequently spoken, in the *Critique*, of a second edition of the Poetical Essays, and, he makes no doubt, that the reader has, as frequently smiled at the very idea of it; but he begs leave to assure him, that the rev. author has repeatedly and seriously talked of treating the public with another impression of this useful and entertaining work. The reason he gives for this design is, that the other sold very well, after Trim had taken notice of

learned by his early and long study of this mysterious doctrine? Why to place implicit confidence in the

of it in the public prints; and has been the means of filling his pockets. The truth is, that after Trim had publicly complained of its *lewdness*, several were bought by the people called methodists, and read with avidity; and, probably, put into the hands of their young disciples, of both sexes, as the likeliest means of encouraging their *best feelings*.——But will Mr. Atkinson *really* give the world another edition of these essays? Will the man that frequently tells his congregation, that *he* has received a commission to instruct and reform mankind, and that it is *his* duty to teach them to controul their passions, and regulate them by the word of God;——will this instructor, this reformer again publish a collection of lascivious images, attended with lewd descriptions, calculated to inflame the passions, and corrupt the minds of the people?

Why slumbers YORK, who leads the pious train,
Nor hears Religion, which he loves, complain;

complain of one of her degenerate sons, who, under the mask of piety, and the pretence of encouraging our *best feelings*, is conveying poison into the bosoms of the youth of both sexes, to fire their blood, and stimulate them to excesses injurious both to their present and future happiness? Whatever the Archbishop may do (and if he does nothing it shall not be for want of information) Trim takes this opportunity of assuring Mr. Atkinson, that, upon the second appearance of his *lewd poems*, he shall hear from him in a very different strain; and he hopes, by the blessing of God, to convince him, that what he has already said upon the subject, is the extremity of lenity and moderation.

the opinion of Athanasius, which has neither reason nor scripture for its support. He told his audience, with great solemnity of speech, that the Son was equal to the Father, being, like him, omnipotent and omniscient. Trim will own that *he* has not made the doctrine of the trinity his particular study; for, finding that the labours of learned men, for near eighteen centuries, have not been able to explain this doctrine, or throw any considerable light upon it, he has, with humility of heart, rested upon the express declarations of scripture, not presuming either to understand, or explain it.

As to Mr. Atkinson's confident assertion that the second person in the trinity is equal in omnipotence and omniscience to the first, Trim will honestly confess that he has some doubts about it; because our Saviour has expressly declared, "My Father is *greater* than I;" and, when asked by his disciples, when the day of judgment would be, he replied, that "no one knew when that day would come, no not the angels of heaven, nor the *Son*, but the Father only." These are the positive words of the great author of our religion, and weigh more with Trim, than those of St. Athanasius, and, indeed, all the saints that ever appeared upon earth.

Mr. Atkinson may delight in many creeds, unintelligible in their language, and irreconcilable in
their

their doctrine. Trim will honestly confess he has but *one*, and that is the New Testament; and that he regards all other creeds only so far as they quadrate with, or are reconcileable to this. At the same time, he has no prejudices against any man or body of men, (on account of their religious opinions) for he thinks, with the learned Bishop of Landaff, that it is a matter of perfect indifference to mankind, whether a doctrine be of Cephas, or of Apollos, or of Paul, provided it be of *Christ*.

For delivering these sentiments, Trim fears the Vicar and Mr. Atkinson will, in future, look upon him as a dissenter and a heretic; but he makes no doubt men of sense (and such only he is ambitious to be thought well of) will receive them with candour and indulgence, considering, that speculative opinions are of inferior consequence, our principal business being to take care that our *lives* are in the right.

Mr. Atkinson not appearing to be well pleased with the extract Trim took the liberty of making from his discourse on the trinity, Trim will introduce one of a very different kind, which he flatters himself, this gentleman will not disown, as it was a bantling, which, at the time of its birth, in the opinion of his religious friends, reflected no small honour

honour both on the virtues and abilities of its parent. "This church," Mr. Atkinson exclaimed, "is open twice every sabbath day for the worship of the Almighty, but there are *some* persons so fashionably genteel, that they will not alter their hour of dining to attend the service of God. I take upon me to assure those persons, that, however they may plead fashion here for such conduct, they will not have the assurance to make that their excuse hereafter."

Such language is, perhaps, too coarse for the pulpit; but it is much more blameable in another point of view, for it is an easy matter, in a small country town, to observe what seats, belonging to genteel families, are empty, and to make the application. Indeed Trim heard several of the common people observe, that "this was a stroke at Mr. Such-a-one, Mr. Atkinson is a bonny preacher, I like Mr. Atkinson, for he loves to have a blow at our great folks."——Is the esteem of such persons worth Mr. Atkinson's seeking; or is it prudent to encourage the lower rank of men to rail at and abuse their superiors?*

To

* That Mr. Atkinson is animated by a strong and laudable motive in his endeavours to bring genteel families to church, in the afternoon, Trim is ready to allow. Performing only at *that time*, it is natural for him to wish for a brilliant audience to display

To give the reader a little variety, Trim begs leave to introduce again to him the Vicar of Bradford; for though he makes Mr. Atkinson the hero of the drama, he means not to be quite inattentive to his virtuous friend: indeed to be so, would be an act of ingratitude, after the respectful attention which this good man, from time to time, has bestowed upon *him*.

This gentleman, in one of his letters, under the respectable name of Anti-Trim, told the public, that "the good old doctrines of the Church of England were universally allowed to be delivered at Bradford church." This, the reader will observe, was an ingenious method of paying a compliment to *himself*. To Trim the design of all this gentleman's discourses seems to be, not like Mr. Atkinson's, to put the second person, in the trinity, on an equality with the first, but to exalt the former, at the expence of the latter, and, therefore every attribute, and every epithet, that is bestowed, by way of distinction, on the *Father*, in the Old and New Testament, is industriously selected by this eminent divine

play his abilities to, and no less natural for him to be out of humour, if the country gentlemen do not bring their wives and daughters, that he may level his rhetorical pieces at these fair objects.

fect; and, it must be owned, that he discovers great judgment in the choice of his saint, as he was the most *learned* of the apostles, and, therefore, most fit to be the patron and protector of this wise and holy order. But that St. Paul had *exactly* the same taste as this gentleman, and that *his* precious ore, like that of Mr. Jesse, Mr. Crosse, &c. is to be found only among unconnected sands, and muddy channels, Trim can by no means allow, having been taught to entertain a very different opinion of this great apostle. Yet he admires the ingenuity and courage of these gentlemen, who, to escape the ridicule and contempt of mankind for their ignorance and simplicity, wisely take shelter behind an illustrious name, and, to make their own nonsense pass current, boldly represent an apostle as great a fool as themselves.

The following trifling circumstance will shew the Vicar of Bradford in a *new* light; and, as trifling *
circum-

* One day, when Cromwell was passing an evening with his principal officers, we are told, that some of the saints came to the door of the room, and earnestly requested an audience. He sent them word, that he could not possibly admit them, being engaged in *seeking the Lord*; when, in reality, he was only seeking the *cork-skew*, which had fallen under the table. This *trifling circumstance* will

circumstances often do, will make the reader better acquainted with this great character than the most exact and accurate delineation. One evening, the service being ended, in passing through the church, Trim observed the Vicar present himself before a small assembly of very young disciples, of both sexes, contained within a small inclosure, at the extremity of the church. Trim stopped, for a moment, to hear the subject of his address, and was much struck with the following introduction. "My little children, I need not inform you, that misery and unhappiness are always the consequence of wickedness and vice, because I make no doubt you have all observed this in your *reading*." Trim could scarce refrain from bursting into a loud laugh; but he knew that in such a holy place,

"To laugh were want of dignity and grace,

"Tho' to be grave surpass'd all power of face."

There was not, perhaps, one child present, above the age of twelve, and, probably, not one who had ever read in any book but the Bible or Testament.

i 2

Trim

will give the reflecting mind a better insight into the character of this arch usurper, than either the metaphysical reasoning of Hume, or the full length pictures of Smollet or Macaulay.

Trim does not mean to blame the Vicar for a failing, which he considers as constitutional and incurable; for so thoughtless and absent is this good man, that though he began with addressing his little children as lambs, it is probable that, before he got to the end of the sentence, he took them for sheep, or full-grown persons.*

Trim

* This gentleman brings into the pulpit a few scraps of dirty paper, about the size of a 12mo. quite loose and detached from each other. These he shifts about, conveys, and reconveys from one hand to the other, with the dexterity of a *Bressaw*, to the no small wonder and admiration of the spectators. It is remarkable, that, in the midst of his warmest exhortations, this good man frequently appears choaked, for a second or two, to the great concern and terror of his audience. A very distinguished personage of the same sect, who has, for many years, been acquainted with this gentleman, told Trim, that it is owing to a very remarkable circumstance; that finding himself, sometimes, falling into the language and tone of methodism, (which *he* thinks he ought by no means to be ashamed of) he endeavours to recover himself, and that it is the difficulty he meets with in this struggle that disconcerts and almost strangles him. The same person informed him, that, for many years before this gentleman resided in Bradford, he regularly attended the meeting-house in that place, but that he always came *incog*, for fear his appearance there might be an obstacle to his future preferment. Mr. John Hodgson of Brierley, a gentleman, no less distinguished by his plain sincerity of speech, than many other amiable qualities, informed Trim, that

he

Trim has observed another singularity in this great man, which is equally edifying and entertaining. Whenever the fifth commandment (Honour thy father and mother) is read, this good man always exclaims, with great fervor, "Lord, have mercy upon us, and incline *our* hearts, &c." Yet this man, like Melchizedek, has, at present, no father or mother, and, therefore, requests a favour of the Deity, which is not in the power even of Omnipotence to grant, without recloathing those departed souls with their garments of flesh and blood, and dismissing them from the regions of bliss to receive additional honour from their pious and affectionate son.

Trim can recollect but one instance of behaviour, in any degree, similar to this. Pauw, in his entertaining work intitled, *Les Recherches philosophiques sur les Americains*, tells us, that the jesuits in South America, (previous to their establishment in Paraguay) enraged against Palafox, bishop of Tlaxala, for exposing their hypocrisy and other crimes to the

i 3

Pope,

he told the Vicar, on his not succeeding in his application for Bradford school, that the governors would have nothing to do with him, because he was a *methodist*. So it seems that notwithstanding his circumspection in this point, this circumstance, by some means or other, unfortunately, transpired.

Pope, added a clause to the Lord's prayer, which they put into the hands of the Indians; "Deliver us, O Lord, from evil, and from our Bishop Palafox." He adds that, though this venerable man has been *dead*, upwards of one hundred years, the Indians of Tlaxala still continue to repeat this clause with the same earnestness and the same fervor which actuated their forefathers.

Trim would have been happy in producing an instance of this kind from a more respectable quarter than that of poor, unenlightened Indians; but, perhaps, he ought to be satisfied with his good fortune, in discovering the *only instance* of such singular and ingenious conduct, which, is, probably, upon record. To be serious: is this the *reasonable service*, which the deity requires of his rational creature, man? When he presents himself before the wisest as well as the best of beings, instead of standing collected in his thoughts, and awefully attentive to the supplication he pronounces, shall he offer him *vox et præterea nihil*, a collection of words, not only without meaning, but marked with inconsistency and nonsense? To illustrate this matter, after the familiar and ingenious method practised by the sect, to which this gentleman belongs: suppose the Vicar should wait on the Minister to request a place or pension

pension for his father; that, after pleading his own long services to mankind, and the much greater of his father as a Middlesex justice, he should succeed in his application; and that, a few days after, Mr. Pitt should be informed that his father had been *dead* many years: would not the Minister think that this was a premeditated design to affront him; or, putting the most humane and indulgent construction on his conduct, look on him as he does on *Peg Nicholson*, or the ingenious Mr. *Stone*, who benevolently offers to make the Princess Royal a happy woman?

Trim is happy in having it in his power to make the reader ample amends for these slight deviations from reason and consistency, by presenting him with an authentic specimen of this gentleman's compositions, which deservedly ranks him with the most elegant writers of the age. He will discover in it the truth and energy of *Robertson*, with the highly polished diction and sarcastic ingenuity of *Gibbon*. It was benevolently written to support his friend's doctrine of the sinfulness of card-playing, and does it with such strength of argument and such powers of raillery, that it is probable, that this iniquitous practice will be abolished, for ever, in the West-Riding of the county of York.

But, not to detain the reader from a treasure he must be impatient to possess.

(COPY.*)

NEC LUSISSE PUDET, SED NON INCIDERE LUDUM.

Hor.

OBSERVING in a late paper a card to Mr. Atkinson, whereby it seems Maria has lulled Arabella into that profound sleep out of which she had lately been awoke by the powerful orations of Mr. Atkinson: and upon weighing over some of the contents; a reader here makes bold to offer a remark or two upon the same.

Mr. Atkinson forbids dancing and card-playing. Maria sensible of her error, but impatient of controul, frets and grieves; at the same time in her heart

* The reader will observe that Trim has transplanted this flower, from a less favourable soil, where its sweetness was wasted, and its beauty passed unnoticed, because the ingenious hand, that planted it, was unknown; so necessary is an illustrious name to give eclat to compositions even of the most transcendent excellence. It will not be improper to add, that it was sent to the printer of the Leeds Intelligencer in the *same* hand-writing, and sealed with the *same* remarkable coat of arms, which distinguishes the letters this gentleman wrote under the signature of *Anti-Trim*.

heart calls him *methodist*.—Then she looks about spies her advantage and away sends Betty to the post-office with a card for the newspaper, to tell the world that Mr. Atkinson has spotted his gown by composing amorous verses.—But at the same time Maria is put to the wretched shift of recording his virtues with his vices. In order to prepossess the reader in her favour she first of all tells us that Mr. Atkinson has in the pulpit pointed out the sad consequences of assemblies and the card table. “All very right said A. B. the honest farmer, looking at his fair daughter. I heartily wish more than Maria had been there.” If such discourses were properly attended to (not to mention the benefit of the soul) many a honest farmer’s and tradesman’s pocket would be spared, instead of falling dupes to knavery, whilst their daughters are thus *innocently* amusing themselves during the lonely state of virginity.

Next Maria inquires if there be any commandment forbidding these harmless diversions? I suppose by the same way of argument, she may prove a certain crime to be no sin, because adultery *alone* is *literally* forbidden. But why is Maria such an advocate for dancing? Can no other exercise heighten the beautiful red upon her rosy cheeks so as to yield additional graces to her native charms, whilst by her
graceful

graceful activity she convinces her partner that she has the natural use of all her limbs? What says Maria in answer? I doubt she is ready to wish herself in the situation of her old acquaintance Prudilla,* whose head never aches in a morning by reason of attending the assembly or rout the night before; and whose mind, unruffled by losses and disappointments, is daily engaged in worshipping her maker, admiring the strength of redeeming love and contemplating the wonders of eternity.

Maria supposes Mr. Atkinson not to be *fond* of cards and dancing, and perhaps imputes that as a reason why he comes not to view her graceful attitudes, whilst she is setting herself off to the utmost
advan-

* Trim has taken the liberty of changing the initial letter of the young lady's name, who was, rather, ungenteelly alluded to above, into *Prudilla*; and, though a few observations on this particular case might convey much salutary admonition to the public, and be very useful to young ladies, in their religious conduct, Trim refrains from dropping a single syllable on the subject, out of respect and reverence for the sex: for,

“Curst be the lines, how well so e’er they flow,
“That tend to make one *honest man* my foe,
“Give virtue scandal, innocence a fear,
“Or, from the soft-eyed maiden steal a tear!

Pope.

advantage and moving herself *aright*.* But here let Maria consider that Mr. Atkinson, like her, is flesh and blood: and the reason why he complies not with her wishes is rather the result of christian self-denial, than an indifferency to these flesh-pleasing amusements. But Maria is of opinion that he might as well do this, as compose love songs. She there touches him in the quick, I must grant: but *still*, if through human inadvertency we fall into one error, there is *no* reason, why we should embrace another.

Maria then objects to *shooting*. But Mr. Atkinson no doubt is a qualified gentleman and as such has a right to practise that diversion, which contains nothing of vice if used in a proper way. Game was made for man and not man for game. Besides hunting is mentioned in holy writ; as a lawful practice; but card-playing no where.

Maria

* It is proper to observe, that the punctuation, in this letter, is the Vicar's, and that his directions for *italics* have been carefully attended to.—Trim forgot to observe, at a proper time, that the singular punctuation, that appears in the extracts from the Poetical Essays, in the *Critique*, is Mr. Atkinson's. It is much to be wished, that these rivals in literature would read *Lowth's Introduction to English Grammar*; as, by so doing, they might not only acquire some idea of punctuation, but some knowledge of grammar, which might be of use to them in their future publications.

Maria lastly complains of a set of preachers of the like persuasion with Mr. Atkinson, for laying too close a restraint on the rising generation. But can she make good this accusation? Better methinks, be a disciple of Mr. Atkinson, and strive against indwelling corruption than gratify the inclinations of a deceitful heart, and like Miss ——— have reason to bewail our youthful pranks all our lifetime afterwards.

OBSERVER.

It would be ungentle to let this ingenious *Observer* escape without treating him with a few observations, in turn. Trim is aware, that it may be deemed presumption to criticise the work of so great a master, but, as his remarks will be founded in truth, he hopes they will not be thought, totally, unworthy of his notice.

What the Vicar means by his motto of

Nec luisse pudet, sed non incidere ludum,

Trim cannot discover. It is probable he did not understand the words, as Trim has frequently heard him say, that he has not, for many years, read a Latin book, of any kind. As his design was to join
Mr.

Mr. Atkinson in condemning card-playing, &c. the words were, rather, unluckily chosen; for the meaning of them is, " Though in my younger days I *played*, and joined in all the fashionable amusements of the age, yet, to do the same, at my present time of life, would be both unbecoming and indecent." It may not be improper to observe, that, though the motto does not very well suit the purpose it was designed for, it serves to give us (though perhaps rather undesignedly) a very just and accurate idea of the past and present disposition of this eminent divine, who was once (if report says true) like Villers,

" The soul of pleasure, and the life of whim."

But, perhaps, the Vicar meant to soften the austerity of his friend's doctrine, and propose *himself* as an example more worthy of imitation. Mr. Atkinson is an enemy to play, at any season, or to any degree, but the Vicar seems to intimate to the young man, that he may, as *he* did, partake of the amusements of the age, as long as he is capable of relishing them, but when he finds, like himself, that his powers of enjoyment begin to fail, that it would be prudent, then, to retire from the scene of action,

—ne

Peccet ad extremum ridendus, et ilia ducat.

Hor.

The Vicar begins his letter with observing, that Arabella had been awoke by the powerful orations of Mr. Atkinson. Trim perfectly agrees with him that this gentleman's discourses are *orations*, not having one quality necessary to constitute a sermon. That they are *powerful*, when addressed to the fair sex, and that they make some slight impression on *their* tender hearts, Trim is ready to allow; but he believes no man of sense ever found any thing in them to admire, except the confidence and vanity of the preacher.* He is sorry to put so great a scholar

* It is remarkable that *women* and *children* are much affected by Mr. Atkinson's sermons, whether it is that they have more sensibility than *men*, or are better judges of the nature and design of such compositions. Trim has heard many men, of good understanding and excellent memories, declare, that having returned home, after listening attentively to Mr. Atkinson; and having endeavoured to recollect the sum and substance of his discourses, they never could, because they consist of a series of observations that have no connection with, or dependance on each other. However, therefore, this gentleman's orations may amuse and entertain for a moment, it is not likely they ever will, in any degree, be either useful or beneficial to mankind.

scholar as the Vicar in mind, that the word *awoke* should be awakened, the participle, and not the preterperfect, being required in this sentence.

He proceeds to say, "Mr. Atkinson forbids dancing and card-playing." Trim is glad to hear the Vicar acknowledge, that Mr. Atkinson has forbidden these amusements, because this gentleman, finding his prohibition ridiculed and treated with the contempt it merited, ventured to declare, on the veracity of a gentleman and a christian, that he never spoke or preached against these amusements. The Vicar, it must be owned, has conducted himself with much more decency and discretion. He avows the doctrine delivered by Mr. Atkinson, and defends it with all the learning and ingenuity he possesses.

The Vicar talks of an assembly or *route*.—Trim is sorry to observe, that a gentleman who has made the *grand tour*, (the constant subject of his conversation) and must have, at least, a few scraps of French left, does not know the difference between *route* and *rou*; the former being a French word, signifying a march, road, &c. and the latter an English one, denoting a numerous company or assembly.

The Vicar talks of Maria moving herself *aright*. The ideas of the good man here seem to wax warm. He recollected, no doubt, his former amusements,
and

and the pleasure he once took in the graceful activity and delightful motions of his fair friends. But, alas !

Tempora mutantur, et nos mutamur in illis :

He, therefore, prudently leaves these things to his younger friend, Mr. William Atkinson, whose *best feelings* have, hitherto, experienced no diminution, or decay.

He next tells us, with much gravity, that Mr. Atkinson is flesh and blood ; and that his not playing at cards or dancing, is rather the result of christian self-denial, than indifference to these flesh-pleasing amusements. The Vicar, it is probable, is well acquainted with the inclinations of his rev. friend, and the account he gives of his fortitude in not partaking of these amusements, (which yet it seems he has a strong propensity to) may, without doubt, be depended upon. What a pity it is that Mr. Atkinson, who is so fond of displaying the graces of his person, should neglect so favourable an opportunity of setting himself off to the best advantage, and moving himself aright. Trim begs leave to assure him, (and he too is a small casuist in divinity) that his salvation will never be endangered either by card-playing, or dancing, if he pursues it with the same moderation, and the same innocent views, as the

the other inhabitants of Bradford. These amusements, too, the world, will, no doubt, think less unbecoming both the seriousness and sanctity he is ambitious to maintain, than composing amorous verses; which, the Vicar, it seems, considers as an *error*; but kindly apologizes for it, by observing, that, through human inadvertency,* he fell into it. As to hunting and shooting, it seems, the Vicar does not consider such amusements as *lawful*, unless the person who pursues them, is qualified by *law*, for such enjoyment. He, therefore, makes no doubt, he says, of his friend's qualification; as he cannot think so holy and godly a man would infringe the laws of his country. But the truth is, Mr. Atkin-

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son

* The reader will observe how indulgent the gentlemen of this sect are to each other. *Their* faults, it seems, never arise from vicious inclinations, or depravity of heart, but from *human inadvertence*; an excuse that will serve as well for *Major Semple* as the Vicar of Bradford. When Billy Oliver, in the most solemn manner, called upon God to bear testimony to a *wilful falsehood*, Mr. Atkinson observed, that the gentleman, who made application to Billy respecting the letters, was to blame; for that it was he, who by *fishbng in troubled waters*, (his own expression, supposed to mean Billy's conscience) had brought this matter to light, and thereby given occasion to the enemies of the Lord to blaspheme.—— Gracious God! what things are some of thy ministers; and how weak are thy rational creatures, to be led and directed by such *things* as these!

son has no estate or living, and the fellowship he holds is no qualification.

To what, or to whom, the Vicar alludes in the conclusion of his letter, Trim knows not. It is very uncharitable and unthinking, to throw out an aspersions, which, applicable to no one, may, with equal propriety, be applied to any one. Trim has resided in Bradford somewhat longer than this gentleman, but never heard a single *faux pas*, on the part of the fair sex, mentioned, or even suspected. The young ladies of Bradford, distinguished as they are by their beauty, Trim can affirm, with truth, are no less distinguished by their discretion; and, perhaps, more innocent, or more amiable characters are not to be found in any town in Great Britain. Trim never heard of a single instance of behaviour, which even the censorious *Mrs. Wormwood*, or *Miss Delia Dainty* (whose delicacy made an apron for her papa's greyhound,) could find fault with, or disapprove.*

In one of his letters signed *Anti-Trim*, speaking of Bradford assembly, the Vicar tells us, that "one Dinah went out upon a time, to see the daughters of the land, and what befell her old Jacob's sons can tell."

* See Hayley's Essay on Old Maids; a book, which Trim knows Mr. Atkinson has read, and which, he makes no doubt, on account of the allusions to *certain pleasures*, with which it abounds, proved very encouraging and comfortable to his *best feelings*.

tell." What is this but an intimation that ladies, in attending Bradford assembly, run the risque of being ravished? Trim hopes that the new Queen, on her accession, or, if the inter-regnum should, unhappily, continue another winter, the regent, or whoever holds the reins of government, will issue a proclamation contradicting and discountenancing such false and scandalous reports. It is not to be wondered at that Bradford assembly is badly attended, when the Vicar of the parish has hinted, in a public newspaper, that ladies, who go thither, run the risque of being ravished. Trim will venture to affirm, that the chastity of the ladies who attend this assembly, is not likely to be so strongly tempted, or in so great danger as his was at the court of Berlin.*

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But

* *Apropos* of Berlin: on looking into Noble's Genealogical History of the present Royal Families of Europe, Trim observes, that the late King of Prussia had six sisters, five of whom were married at the time the Vicar visited Berlin. The princess *Ann Charlotte Amelia*, who was born in 1723, was the only one, who remained unmarried; who must, therefore, be the lady alluded to. She was, at this time, upwards of forty; and, therefore, as the Vicar observed, not *young*. But this lady was, at that time, Abbess of Queidlingburg, and surely would not behave in a manner so unbecoming her religious character. It is probable that knowing the Vicar was a protestant clergyman, (she herself having the government of a protestant abbey) she wished to consult him

But the Vicar, Trim fears, entertains a very unjust opinion of the morals and character of the people of Bradford. Trim will venture to affirm, that the manners of the higher and middle rank of people, in that place, are as pure as those of any manufacturing town in the West-Riding. That those of the lower class are more profligate than those of some other places, he is willing to allow, and he is sorry to assert, that this is owing, in a great measure, to the conduct of their present minister.

The late worthy Vicar (the loss of whom the inhabitants feel more and more every day) thought he did *his* duty, by serving the church on Sundays, and by reading prayers twice a week. The present, more godly man, thinking such service not sufficient for the purposes of salvation, reads prayers and preaches every Thursday, between seven and eight,
in

him, in private, on some important point in divinity; which this gentleman, unfortunately, mistook for an intimation of a very different kind. Or, perhaps, at this time, one of her sisters might have lost her consort; and this might be the generous offer of a gallant and unceremonious *widow*. This seems more probable, as it is not likely (whatever an English Clergyman might do) that a Lady Abbess would act so inconsistently with her holy profession, as to appear publicly at a *masquerade*. However this may be, or whoever was the princess alluded to, it is a blot on the royal house of Prussia, which Trim hopes some future historian will endeavour to efface.

in the evening. The church of Bradford, is, unfortunately, situated among the most profligate and abandoned of one sex. These, in dark nights, flock to the church; and disorderly persons, of the other sex, knowing their place of *rendezvous*, resort thither for the most licentious and abandoned purposes. Trim has been told that the Vicar, one evening, observed some proceedings of this kind, and finding that the parties, so wickedly employed, were not content with one embrace, but were about to proceed to a second, he sent a proper person to interpose, and prevent the repetition of such ungodly practices. It would be much better to remove the cause of these disorders, than let the church of Bradford continue to be a *meeting-house*, for the accomodation of persons of both sexes, to gratify their depraved and lascivious inclinations in.

I shall now take my leave of this godlike man, and the great poet, his amiable friend, with relating a curious anecdote of the latter, but, in some degree, interesting to both.

Mr. Atkinson, in his sermon of Sept. 9, 1787, the subject of which was the various persecutions which good men suffer from the ungodly, intimated, that *he*, also, was about to suffer persecution for righteousness' sake. It was generally understood, that he alluded to the *Critique* on the *Essays*, the publi-

publication of which was daily expected. So it seems probable, that when Mr. Atkinson puts the *Critique* into his pocket, the latter will receive the same pious, electric stroke, attended with the same cant and hypocrisy, which this gentleman so justly ridiculed in his holy friend, the Vicar.

Demas was accused of withholding a considerable sum of money, from its just and legal owners. This, it seems, in the opinion of the Vicar, was *righteousness*. Mr. Atkinson is censured for writing lewd poems,* tending to corrupt the minds of the people; and this, it seems, in *his* opinion, is also *righteousness*. Trim has heard of a certain King, whose

* Mr. Miles Atkinson, in his ingenious work intitled *Thoughts on the Entertainments of the Stage*, observes, that "It is not easy to be conceived how any person can sit to hear *lewd discourses* and *wanton songs*, with patience, and yet be possessed of *modesty* and *purity of heart*."——What does he think of his Brother's *modesty* and *purity of heart*, who has gone much farther; who has sat down to compose *lewd discourses* and *wanton songs* for the instruction and entertainment of the people? Never, perhaps, were brothers more different in their taste.

*Castor gaudet equis : ovo prognatus eodem
Pugnis.*——

Hor.

One Brother is for encouraging our *best feelings*, the other is for our making no use of them at all. Which of these learned men is in the right; or, whose doctrine is the most rational and scriptural, Trim will not presume to determine,

———*non nostrum est tantas componere lites.*

whose hands converted every thing they touched into gold. So it seems, whatever *crimes* these godly men commit, they immediately become shining and transcendent *virtues*. What simpletons must these men be to fall into this strange delusion; or what greater simpletons do they think mankind, whom they hope to dupe with such groundless and ridiculous pretensions to sanctity and righteousness! Trim, the reader will recollect, with a smiling countenance, and not, unfrequently, with a tender hand, has touched only *notorious* and *acknowledged foibles*, with a benevolent design of curing, or removing them; whilst these gentlemen have been, charitably, employed in fabricating falsehoods,* which, yet, they had

* The Vicar, indeed, has repeatedly, in the public papers, threatened Trim with a *dream*; and what is somewhat extraordinary, at a time too, when Trim had not said a syllable about *him*, but, perhaps, a good conscience whispering to him, that he, possibly, *might*, this prudent man thought it would be better, by an ingenious manœuvre, to avert a calamity, than, by remaining inactive, to suffer it to fall upon him. But, alas! Trim is not made of such stuff as to be intimidated by *dreams*: they may terrify the pick-pocket, or alarm the hypocrite, but make no impression upon *him*. However, if this gentleman's *dream* is ready, whether it is the product of his sleeping or waking thoughts, (for the latter, from their incoherence and eccentricity, have a great similitude to dreams) Trim earnestly requests him to produce it, and engages, in turn, to treat *him* with something infinitely more solid and substantial.

It may not be amiss to add, that Billy Oliver not having been
expel-

had neither the spirit, nor ingenuity to support. Trim will not say they have persecuted *him* for righteousness' sake, because he has neither the vanity, nor the impudence to think, or talk thus of himself; but will honestly confess they have endeavoured to punish him for a crime of no small magnitude;—for profanely peeping into the tabernacle, and proclaiming to the world that he found nothing there but dissimulation and hypocrisy. With *hearts* admirably well disposed, these good men, happily for mankind, want *heads* for the execution of their projects;—like eunuchs, they are tormented with an inclination, without the ability of doing mischief.

expelled, in consequence of his late misconduct, as was expected, the board of reformation at Bradford still consists of this virtuous man, his master the venerable Anti-Trim, and the chaste author of the Poetical Essays. The reader, on seeing these names, will, probably, smile, and ask,

quis custodiet ipsos
Custodes?

Juv.

WHO WILL REFORM THESE REFORMERS?



